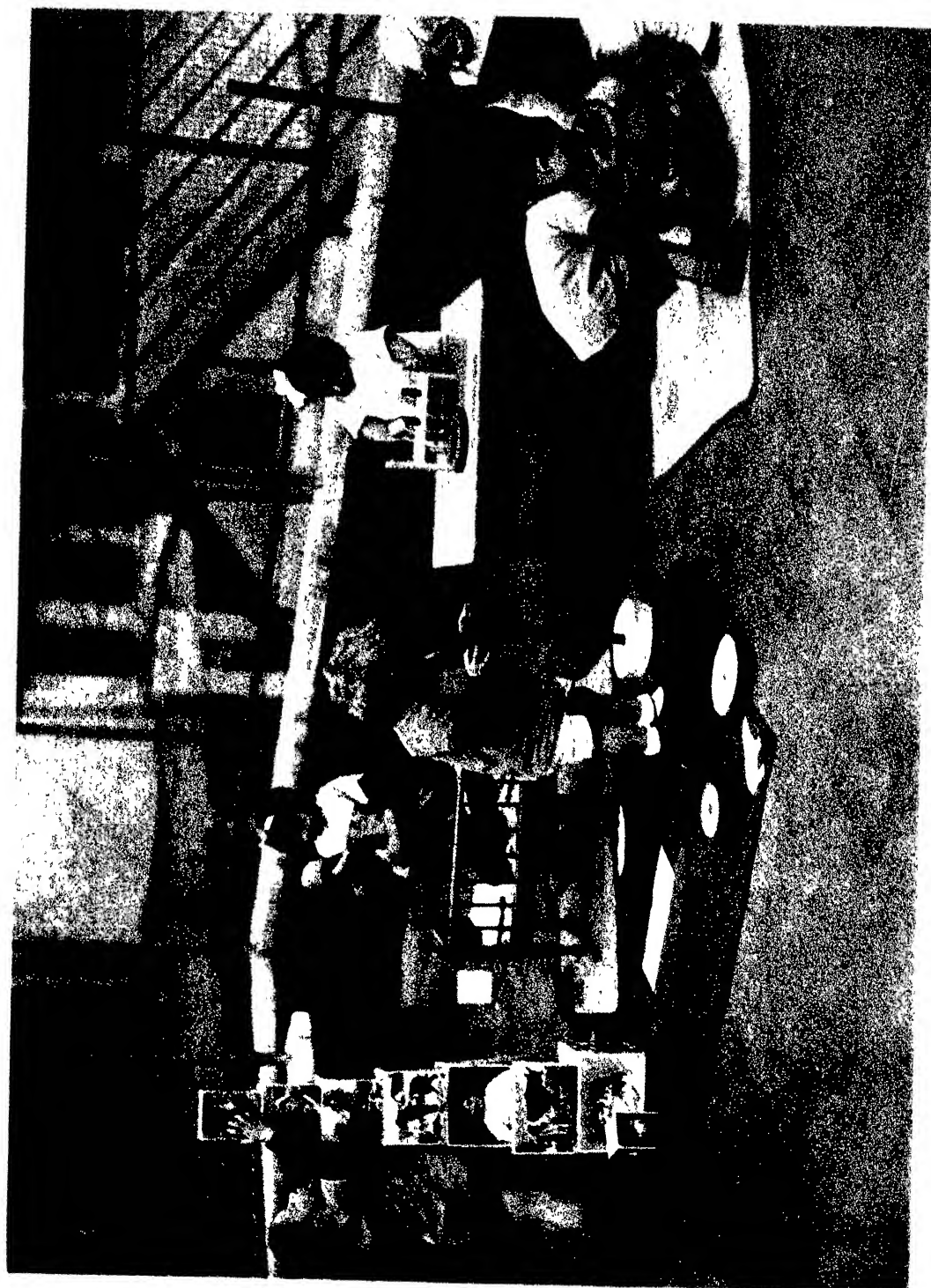


THE PRACTICAL
INFANT TEACHER
VOLUME I



Toddlers at play at the Rachel McMillan Nursery School

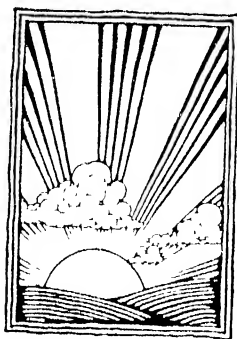
THE PRACTICAL INFANT TEACHER

A GUIDE TO THE MOST MODERN METHODS OF TEACHING
AND THE HAPPY OCCUPATIONS OF CHILDREN IN NURSERY
AND INFANT SCHOOLS

CONTRIBUTED BY LEADING AUTHORITIES IN EVERY BRANCH OF INFANT EDUCATION
WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATED SCHEMES OF WORK AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Edited by P. B. BALLARD, M.A., D.Lit. (Lond.)

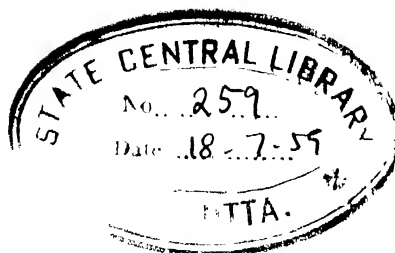
Associate Editor: E. R. BOYCE



VOLUME I

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EDITOR'S NOTE

IT has been well said that the human race moves forward on the feet of little children. The term "little" is significant ; for a man is made or marred in his earliest years. Nothing that happens to a child after he is seven, nothing short of a great and devastating calamity, matters so much as what happens to him before he is seven. Some would put the dividing line still earlier. In fact, the whole trend of modern psychology is to push farther and farther back along the line of age the real formative influences on a child's mind and character.

It follows that the infant teacher has to shoulder a larger share of responsibility than any of her colleagues. She, more than any other type or grade of teacher, tills the child's mind and sows therein the seeds of future happiness and future competence. Her problem is not so much to impart knowledge as to produce a right attitude to knowledge, and, indeed, a right attitude to life in general. She has to put the child on good terms with his surroundings—to make him friendly towards the social world into which he has been born, towards its ideals and its culture, towards the whole spiritual and temporal universe. She has the real cure of souls. And to do the work well is extraordinarily difficult. Goodwill is not enough. Familiarity with the elements of learning is not enough. Even that motherly instinct, which so often guides one aright, can just as often lead one astray. To bring up a child in the way he should go demands expert knowledge and expert skill. And the younger the pupil the greater the need for sound pedagogy—the greater the need for knowing what to teach, when to teach it, and how to teach it.

Amid the pitfalls and difficulties of early training every teacher, however experienced she may be, stands in need of a guiding hand. She needs all the light that psychology, physiology, and preventive medicine can throw upon the task she has in hand. And this is precisely what this work, the *PRACTICAL INFANT TEACHER*, has to offer. It offers counsel—the best that can be secured—upon all questions that vitally concern the teacher of the very young; it offers practical and detailed advice on every branch of the infant school curriculum. It thus goes forth on its mission of helpfulness with a message of friendly greeting and goodwill. May it lighten the teacher's burden and illumine her path; may it bring much happiness into the lives of her innumerable charges.

P. B. Ballard.

SUBJECTS IN VOLUME I

| | |
|--|--|
| THE INFANT SCHOOL ITS AIMS AND IDEALS | THE FIRST YEAR IN SCHOOL |
| CHILD DEVELOPMENT | CREATIVE PLAY IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL |
| HEALTH EDUCATION | THE NATURAL PATHWAY TO LEARNING IN THE |
| THE HEALTHY SCHOOL LIFE | INFANTS' SCHOOL |
| THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE | EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION |
| SCHOOL MEALS | TESTS FOR ABILITY AND PROGRESS |
| THE NURSERY SCHOOL | TESTS FOR READING IN THE TRANSITION |
| THE NURSERY CLASS, THE TEACHER AND HER | CLASS |
| WORK | RECORD CARDS IN THE INFANT SCHOOL |
| METHODS OF TEACHING INFANT CLASSES | PARENTS' MEETINGS |
| INDIVIDUAL WORK, GROUP WORK AND CLASS | DISPLAYS AND CELEBRATIONS |
| TEACHING | |

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| EDITOR'S NOTE. (<i>Dr. P. B. Ballard</i>) | V |
| THE INFANT SCHOOL: ITS AIMS AND IDEALS. (<i>Dr. P. B. Ballard</i>) | 1 |
| Origin and history—Pioneer work—From Wilderspin to Froebel—From Froebel to Montessori—Principles of individual work—Importance of hand-work and apparatus—The Nursery School—The Nursery School as a separate entity—Future of the Infant School—Preparation for Junior School | |
| CHILD DEVELOPMENT. (<i>Dr. E. M. Balint and Dr. I. R. Hellman</i>) | 13 |
| The teacher's approach—Earliest developments—Growth of perception—The father—Other children—Living together—Growing importance of speech—Value of curiosity—Need of appreciation—How play helps the child—Parents and teachers work together | |
| HEALTH EDUCATION. (<i>E. F. Brackenbury</i>) | 26 |
| Attitude to health—The personal approach—Learning the nature of things—The teacher's plan—Classroom examples—Milk and meal times—Sleep—Clothing—Attitude to cleanliness—Teeth—Health experience | |
| THE HEALTHY SCHOOL LIFE. (<i>Dr. Irene M. Holoran</i>) | 40 |
| The building—Precautions against infection—Toxins and anti-toxins—The carrier problem—Immunity from infection—Immunization—Rest and sleep—Milk in schools—Vitamin supplements—Accident prevention—Physical education—Parent-Teacher organizations | |
| THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE. (<i>Dr. Irene M. Holoran</i>) | 56 |
| Inspections by the School Doctor—Common physical defects in the Infants' School—Eyes—Ear, nose and throat—Speech—Right- and left-handedness—The skin—Postural and orthopaedic defects—The chest—Wetting or soiling in school—Nervous system—The school clinic—The school dental service—The School Nurse | |
| SCHOOL MEALS. (<i>Dr. Irene M. Holoran</i>) | 67 |
| Nutritive value—Social value—Hygiene in the canteen | |
| FIRST AID IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL. (<i>Dr. Irene M. Holoran</i>) | 74 |
| The first aid box—Types of injury—General principles of first aid | |
| THE NURSERY SCHOOL. (<i>E. Stevinson</i>) | 79 |
| The need for the Nursery School—The question of health—All-round development—The open-air Nursery School—Different types of school—The staff—School routine—Premises—Equipment—Types of activity—The two-year-old child—The trained teacher and the untrained helper—Nursery school meals—Vitamins—Water for drinking—A suitable menu—Dinner-time—Rest—The formation of good habits—Free activity—The toddler at play—The toddler contrasted with the four-year-old—The older nursery school child—Change of occupation—Allowance for concentration—Suitability of material for play—The young beginner—The four-year-old plays—Community life—The day's programme—Music—Service at dinner—Sleep time—Tea-time—Holidays in the country—The Margaret McMillan house at Wrotham—Home education in the past—Home education in modern times—A troublesome child—A "negative" child—The medical examination—The financial crisis and the Nursery School—The emergency Nursery School—Mrs. Wintringham's Report—The future | |
| THE NURSERY CLASS, THE TEACHER AND HER WORK. (<i>G. M. Goldsworthy</i>) | 101 |
| Physical and spiritual growth—Planning a nursery class—Staff—Size of class—Admission of children—Accommodation—Isolation room—Out-door play space—Cloakroom—Washing annexe—Lavatories—Beds—Bed and toy storage—Equipment of nursery class rooms—Meals—Equipment of playground and garden—Indoor play equipment—Painting—Simple | |

tools—Building bricks—Dramatic play—Book corner—Soft toys—General cleanliness—Care of play material—A day in the nursery class—In fine weather—Story-telling—The technique of telling stories—The use of illustrations in story-telling—Bible stories—Music—Do's and don'ts for the music period—Informal group interests—Laying of tables—Some important do's and don'ts for dinner time—Rest period—Variation of programme in bad weather—Sense-training games—Special occasions—Children's questions—Children's difficulties

METHODS OF TEACHING INFANT CLASSES. (*R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne*) . . . 139

Learning by imitation—Learning by doing—Learning by games—Previous training of the child—Teacher and child must be friends—Unwise competition

INDIVIDUAL WORK, GROUP WORK AND CLASS TEACHING. (*R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne*) . . . 146

Individual work—The Dalton plan—Group work—Class teaching—Free choice in work—The Project method

THE FIRST YEAR IN SCHOOL. (*E. R. Boyce*) . . . 150

The nature of five-year-olds—The needs of five-year-olds in school—The teacher's aims—Settling down in school—The teacher's attitude—Types of "difficult" behaviour—Introducing them to a wider world—A lively classroom—The furniture—Materials—Choosing materials—The out-door classroom—Arranging the classroom—The quiet corner—The painting group—The "making" table or shelf—The ragbag and sewing materials—The shop corner—The discovery shelves—Indoor gardens—Aquaria—Calendars and weather charts—The pattern of life in the five-year-olds' classroom—Suggestions for a daily pattern—Wider interests: stories and verse—Musical activities—Language development in the beginners' class—The improvement of speech—The place of the 3 R's in the class for five-year-olds—The challenge to read and write—Experience of reading as recording—Discovering the need to read—First writing—Learning their first reading-book vocabulary—Using the Wall Story—First individual work—Reading the first book—Number in the five-year-olds' classroom—Records

CREATIVE PLAY IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL. (*Dorothy M. Alderson*) . . . 190

Play as part of the curriculum—The materials—Class discussion—The part of the teacher

THE NATURAL PATHWAY TO LEARNING IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL. (*F. I. Sergeant*) 196

The five-year-old at school—The school background—Material required—The children's house—Washing day—Shopping—Material not in itself representative of home or immediate environment—The importance of self-initiated interests in the education of five-year-olds—Work in progress—Discussion periods—Children of six to seven years of age—Dramatic activities—Various ways by which dramatic representation may be developed and presented—Puppetry—Shops and shopping—Post office—Special home interests—The art of cooking—Cooking materials—Brick buildings—Transport—Further constructions with various types of material—Woodwork—Sewing materials—Modelling—Box toys—Group interests—Towards seven years of age—Painting—Drawing with crayons and coloured pencils—The classroom library—Book making and illustrating—Organization for the self-chosen work of children of six to seven years of age—Morning prayers—The time table

EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION. (*E. M. Ingram*). . . 222

Habits of working collectively and joyfully—What can be done as a beginning—"Setting the stage"—Discussion of free activity—Materials—The making box—Water, sand and clay groups—House play—Building with big bricks—Dressing-up box—Drawing on teacher's big blackboards—Individual sacks of bricks—Woodwork—Painting—Programme of school day—Nature experiences—Classroom library or book corner—Assemblies

TESTS FOR ABILITY AND PROGRESS. (*R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne*) . . . 246

Tests of intelligence—Binet tests—Finding the intelligence quotient—The difficult child—Mental harmony—The Detroit kindergarten test—Otis test—Age grouping—Uses and limitations of intelligence tests

CONTENTS

XI

| | |
|--|-------------|
| TESTS FOR READING IN THE TRANSITION CLASS. (<i>R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne</i>) | PAGE 252 |
| The Haggerty group tests—Detroit group test—Minneapolis reading test—Gates' reading tests—Individual tests—Jones vocabulary test—Teacher's own tests—Standards for promotion—Number tests | |
| RECORD CARDS IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL. (<i>John and Peggy Bradley</i>) | 257 |
| The purpose of record cards—Main requirements of record cards—Material to be recorded—Health and Attendance—Home conditions—Standardized procedure: objective tests—Attainment tests—Intelligence tests—Standardized procedure: teachers' estimates—The five-point scale | |
| PARENTS' MEETINGS. (<i>Dr. F. H. Hayward</i>) | 270 |
| Touching reality in the child—Education of the parents—Good advice to the parents | |
| THE AIM OF SCHOOL FESTIVITIES. (<i>R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne</i>) | 272 |
| Social gatherings—Love of pageantry—Educational value | |
| VARIOUS KINDS OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS. (<i>R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne</i>) | 274 |
| What they teach—The harvest festival—Christmas festival—Spring, Easter, and May-day festivals—Saints' days—Children entertain parents—Open days—Grown-up functions—Flower shows | |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| TODDLERS AT PLAY AT THE McMILLAN NURSERY SCHOOL | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
|---|---------------------|

THE INFANT SCHOOL—ITS AIMS AND IDEALS

| | FIG. | PAGE |
|---|------|------|
| PLAN OF A WILDERSPIN INFANT SCHOOL | 1 | 3 |
| ORATORY SCHOOL, CHELSEA, 1905 | 2 | 5 |
| ORATORY SCHOOL, CHELSEA CORRESPONDING CLASS IN 1925 | 3 | 5 |
| THE TWINS BEFORE ENTERING THE NURSERY SCHOOL | 4 | 9 |
| AFTER ONE MONTH AT THE NURSERY SCHOOL | 5 | 9 |
| THE INFANT ROOM OF TODAY | 6 | 10 |
| INDIVIDUAL WORK | 7 | 11 |

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| CONFIDENCE IN PHYSICAL CONTROL | 1 | 14 |
| THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE | 2 | 15 |
| EXPLORATION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD | 3 | 16 |
| EXPERIMENTING | 4 | 18 |
| MEAL-TIME WITH OTHERS | 5 | 18 |
| HELPING ONE ANOTHER | 6 | 19 |
| SEE WHAT I CAN DO! | 7 | 20 |
| PAINTING LURID PICTURES | 8 | 21 |
| LEARNING TO CONTROL THE MEDIUM | 9 | 22 |
| TRYING TO BE LIKE MOTHER | 10 | 24 |
| WORKING TOGETHER | 11 | 24 |

HEALTH EDUCATION

| | | |
|---|-------|----|
| STIMULATING AN INTEREST IN THE NATURE OF THINGS | 1 | 27 |
| A SIMPLE POSTER AS AN INCENTIVE IN HEALTH EDUCATION | 2 | 29 |
| SIMPLE MATS HELP TO PROTECT FURNITURE | 3 | 30 |
| AN ADVANCE ON THE EARLIER SIMPLE POSTER | 4 (a) | 32 |
| CHILDREN USE THEIR NEWLY ACQUIRED READING SKILL TO UNDERSTAND THE MESSAGE OF THE POSTER | 4 (b) | 33 |
| SENSIBLE CLOTHING FOR ACTIVE CHILDREN | 5 | 35 |
| POSTER FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE REACHED THE "GROUP" PHASE | 6 | 37 |

THE HEALTHY SCHOOL LIFE

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| A MODERN INFANT SCHOOL | 1 | 41 |
| A PLEASANT APPROACH AND ENTRANCE | 2 | 41 |
| MODERN VENTILATION—NOTE CERESTORY WINDOW | 3 | 43 |
| MODERN TOILET FITTINGS | 4 | 44 |
| IMMUNIZATION | 5 | 46 |
| SPREADING THE GOSPEL OF CLEANLINESS | 6 | 47 |
| MILK-TIME ARRANGEMENT SUITABLE FOR OLDER CHILDREN | 7 | 50 |
| SAFETY FIRST | 8 | 52 |
| SUITABLE DRESS AND APPARATUS | 9 | 53 |
| A STUDY IN RELAXATION | 10 | 54 |

THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| THE PLAY WAY TO A HAPPY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DOCTOR AND NURSE | 1 | 57 |
| FOOTWORK AND POSTURE | 2 | 60 |
| USING THE BEAN BAG | 3 | 60 |
| CONCENTRATED EFFORT | 4 | 61 |

| | FIG. | PAGE |
|--|------|------|
| VISITING THE SCHOOL CLINIC | 5 | 63 |
| THE DENTIST VISITS THE SCHOOL | 6 | 64 |
| A STUDY IN HYPEREXTENSION OF THE SPINE | 7 | 65 |

SCHOOL MEALS

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| A MODERN SCHOOL KITCHEN | 1 | 68 |
| SERVING MEALS IN THE DINING HALL | 2 | 69 |
| LEARNING TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER | 3 | 70 |
| "FAMILY" DINNER SERVICE | 4 | 71 |
| A NURSERY CLASS AT DINNER | 5 | 72 |
| ENJOYING DINNER WHILST LEARNING TO USE GROWN-UP CUTLERY | 6 | 73 |

THE NURSERY SCHOOL

| | | |
|---|----|-----|
| A GROUP OF NEWCOMERS TO THE NURSERY SCHOOL | 1 | 79 |
| FEEDING THE PIGEONS | 2 | 80 |
| ENJOYING A SPLASH IN THE PADDLING POOL | 3 | 80 |
| A CORNER OF THE BATHROOM | 4 | 82 |
| WASHING IS A SERIOUS BUSINESS | 5 | 83 |
| DINNER-TIME IN THE NURSERY SCHOOL | 6 | 84 |
| OFF TO THE LAND OF NOD | 7 | 85 |
| TWO-YEAR-OLDS AT PLAY | 8 | 86 |
| "THIS IS MY MUM" | 9 | 86 |
| THE JOY OF ACHIEVEMENT | 10 | 87 |
| THE TODDLERS PLAYING IN THE SANDPIT | 11 | 88 |
| OFF FOR A RIDE | 12 | 89 |
| FOUR-YEAR-OLDS AT PLAY | 13 | 89 |
| PLAYING AT HOUSE | 14 | 90 |
| SOCIAL PLAY | 15 | 90 |
| "THIS IS HOW WE DO IT" | 16 | 91 |
| NOW FOR A BATH | 17 | 92 |
| REST TIME | 18 | 92 |
| THE MARGARET McMILLAN HOUSE, WROTHAM | 19 | 93 |
| THE QUADRANGLE, WROTHAM | 20 | 94 |
| A DORMITORY AT WROTHAM | 21 | 95 |
| THE EMERGENCY OPEN AIR NURSERY SCHOOL, MIDDLESBOROUGH | 22 | 98 |
| MARGARET McMILLAN—PROPHET AND PIONEER | 23 | 99 |
| HEALTHY AND HAPPY EXERCISE | 24 | 100 |

THE NURSERY CLASS, THE TEACHER AND HER WORK

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| A SENSE OF SECURITY AND CONFIDENCE IN ADULTS | 1 | 102 |
| MENTAL DEVELOPMENT—CONCENTRATION | 2 | 103 |
| CLOAKROOM ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TINIEST | 3 | 108 |
| OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY | 4 | 111 |
| INDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY | 5 | 112 |
| IMPROVISED PLAY MATERIAL | 6 | 113 |
| MODELLING IN CLAY | 7 | 114 |
| SIMPLE WOODWORK | 8 | 115 |
| CARE OF LIVE THINGS—CLEANLINESS | 9 | 116 |
| THE NATURE CORNER | 10 | 118 |
| SUN-BATHING IN PLAYTIME | 11 | 119 |
| THE SISTINE MADONNA BY RAPHAEL | 12 | 124 |
| MOVEMENT TO MUSIC | 13 | 127 |
| THE NURSERY CLASS AT DINNER | 14 | 131 |
| RESTING AFTER DINNER | 15 | 134 |
| THE CARE OF PETS | 16 | 137 |

METHODS OF TEACHING INFANT CLASSES

| | FIG. | PAGE |
|--|------|------|
| THE GAME OF PAT-A-CAKE | 1 | 140 |
| AN EXAMPLE OF THE OLD-FASHIONED "SIMPLE-TO-COMPLEX" KINDERGARTEN CONSTRUCTION. | 2 | 142 |
| WHAT CHILDREN LIKE TO BUILD OF BRICKS—A DOLL'S ROOM | 3 | 143 |
| MOTHER AND CHILD | 4 | 145 |

INDIVIDUAL WORK, GROUP WORK AND
CLASS TEACHING

| | | |
|--|---|-----|
| THE BLACKSMITH IN HIS WORKSHOP | 1 | 147 |
| THE COBBLER | 2 | 149 |

THE FIRST YEAR IN SCHOOL

| | | |
|---|----|-----|
| A DISPLAY OF ANGER IS OFTEN SEEN IN LITTLE CHILDREN | 1 | 151 |
| SMALL BOYS USING THEIR SENSE-TRAINING APPARATUS OUT-OF-DOORS | 2 | 154 |
| IMPROVISED WASHING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN | 3 | 156 |
| "THIS IS MY PEG" | 4 | 158 |
| THE QUIET CORNER | 5 | 164 |
| SENSE-TRAINING APPARATUS | 6 | 165 |
| THE PAINTING GROUP | 7 | 166 |
| SEWING MATERIAL EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO CHILDREN | 8 | 167 |
| SHOPPING AND HOME ACTIVITIES | 9 | 168 |
| WEATHER CALENDAR FOR A WEEK | 10 | 170 |
| ADJUSTABLE CHART FOR DAILY WEATHER RECORD | 11 | 170 |
| THE BOOK TABLE—AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO "READ" | 12 | 180 |
| A HOME-MADE BOOK WRITTEN BY TEACHER, ILLUSTRATED BY CHILDREN | 13 | 181 |
| CHILD'S ILLUSTRATION FOR DAILY NEWS SHEET | 14 | 182 |
| CALENDAR FOR CHILDREN TO ADJUST DAILY | 15 | 182 |
| ADJUSTABLE WALL CHARTS SHOWING CHILDREN THE NECESSITY FOR READING | 16 | 183 |
| A CHILD'S FIRST WRITING BOOK | 17 | 184 |
| WALL CHARTS TO SUPPLEMENT A READING BOOK | 18 | 185 |
| MATCHING CARDS FOR USE WITH WALL CHARTS | 19 | 186 |
| EXAMPLES OF WORK CARDS BASED ON NEWLY ACQUIRED VOCABULARY | 20 | 187 |
| MAKING GOOD USE OF THE PIANO | 21 | 189 |

THE NATURAL PATHWAY TO LEARNING
IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

| | | |
|--|----|-------------|
| A CHILDREN'S HOUSE. | 1 | 197 |
| MEASURING WATER | 2 | 200 |
| BUILDING WITH A VARIETY OF SHAPED BRICKS | 3 | 201 |
| SPECIAL CONSTRUCTIONS WITH BRICKS | 4 | 202 |
| TOYS MADE WITH WOOD, EMPTY BOXES AND OTHER MATERIAL | 5 | 204 |
| SIX-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN AT THEIR BAKER'S SHOP | 6 | 207 |
| TOYS MADE FROM WOOD BY 6- TO 7-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN | 7 | 208 |
| AEROPLANE MADE TO GIVEN MEASUREMENTS BY A 7-YEAR-OLD BOY | 8 | 209 |
| CONSTRUCTIONS IN WOOD, CLAY AND CARDBOARD | 9 | 212 |
| WRITING AND DRAWING BY JOHN AGED 6 YEARS 10 MONTHS | 10 | 215 |
| MAKING USE OF A PICTURE DICTIONARY | 11 | 216 |
| SIX-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN WRITING FREELY AND USING PICTURE DICTIONARIES. | 12 | 217 |
| DOUBLE PAGE OF 6-YEAR-OLD'S BOOK. | 13 | 218 and 219 |
| CHILDREN AGED 6½ YEARS WRITING STORIES | 14 | 221 |

EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION

| | FIG | PAGE |
|---|-----|------|
| WALL BLACKBOARD WITH LEDGE FOR CHALKS AND DUSTER | 1 | 223 |
| CO-OPERATIVE WORK IN ARRANGING FLOWERS FOR THE SCHOOLROOM | 2 | 224 |
| CHILDREN AT WORK | 3 | 226 |
| WALL POCKETS TO FIT WALL SPACE, CABINETS FOR PICTURE POST CARDS; THE CLEANING CUPBOARD | 4 | 229 |
| TEACH THEM EARLY TO KEEP THEIR THINGS CLEAN | 5 | 230 |
| MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR RECORDING OF NATURE OBSERVATIONS | 6 | 243 |

TESTS FOR ABILITY AND PROGRESS

| | | |
|--|---|-----|
| EXTRACT FROM DETROIT FIRST GRADE INTELLIGENCE TEST | 1 | 248 |
| FROM THE DETROIT KINDERGARTEN TEST | 2 | 249 |
| OTIS SIMILARITIES TEST | 3 | 250 |

TESTS FOR READING IN THE TRANSITION CLASS

| | | |
|--|---|-----|
| THE HAGGERLY PICTURE COMPLETION TEST | 1 | 252 |
| EXTRACT FROM DETROIT GROUP TEST IN WORD RECOGNITION | 2 | 253 |
| THE MINNEAPOLIS PRIMARY READING TEST | 3 | 254 |
| EXTRACT FROM GATES' PRIMARY READING TEST, TYPE 1: WORD RECOGNITION | 4 | 255 |
| EXTRACT FROM GATES' PRIMARY READING TEST, TYPE 2: PHRASE AND SENTENCE READING | 5 | 255 |
| EXTRACT FROM GATES' PRIMARY READING TEST, TYPE 3: READING OF PARAGRAPHS | 6 | 255 |

RECORD CARDS IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

| | | |
|--|---|-----|
| DISTRIBUTION CURVE FROM RESULTS OF TESTING A GROUP OF UNSELECTED CHILDREN | 1 | 263 |
| BLOCK DIAGRAM BASED ON SAME RESULTS AS FIG. 1 | 2 | 263 |

VARIOUS KINDS OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

| | | |
|---|----|-----|
| LEAF SHAPES FOR HARVEST FESTIVAL INVITATIONS | 1 | 275 |
| HOW TO CUT A PAPER BELL | 2 | 276 |
| BELL CUT OUT OF FOLDED PAPER | 3 | 277 |
| A PAPER FESTOON | 4 | 278 |
| THE LANTERN | 5 | 278 |
| TO MAKE A LAMP SHADE | 6 | 279 |
| A PAPER BALL | 7 | 279 |
| A SIMPLE CHRISTMAS DRAWING | 8 | 280 |
| PAPER MATS AND CANDLE-STICK | 9 | 281 |
| PAPER DISHES | 10 | 282 |
| PAPER FRUIT BOWL | 11 | 283 |
| FLAGS AND EMBLEMS OF PATRON SAINTS | 12 | 285 |
| PART OF A FLOWER CHART OF CUT PAPER FLOWERS FOR A FLOWER SHOW | 13 | 287 |



THE INFANT SCHOOL ITS AIMS AND IDEALS

By Dr. P. B. Ballard

THE English (or to be more exact, the British) Infant School is unique ; it has no exact parallel in any other country.

As soon as he is three years of age, the British child is permitted to attend school ; when he reaches five, he is compelled to attend school. Between these two ages, about half the children of these islands are under instruction in infant schools. In no other country do these conditions hold good ; in no other country is the compulsory age lower than six ; and in no other country is such liberal advantage taken of permissive, as distinct from compulsory infant schooling. Moreover, the provision that is elsewhere made for children under six is, as a rule, sporadic and unorganized. Where children under that age are regularly admitted, they are placed not in a school by themselves but in a subsidiary section of a senior school.

In Britain, on the other hand, we have the genuine infant school—a large school forming part of the primary system, yet organized as a relatively independent department, with a head mistress of its own, and offering a distinct

and systematic course of education to children from the ages of three to seven.

Origin and History

When Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster established the monitorial system in England and schools for the poor began to spread over the country, no distinction was made between infants and seniors. All the pupils were taught together—generally in one room—and subjected to the same mode of training.

The modern infant school was born in Scotland over a hundred years ago. Its father was Robert Owen, who was then in charge of a cotton mill at New Lanark. His aim was to remedy the hardships experienced by mothers who were employed at the mill, and who were obliged to leave their young children at home during the day. He employed a single woman as a baby-minder, and she guarded the children in a large room, while the mothers were at work.

It was soon found, however, that the children could not amuse themselves without toys,

pictures, and music. So toys, pictures, and music were provided. Then it was found that the time still hung heavily on the children's hands, and the superintendent began to teach them the alphabet. Gradually the playing was reduced and the learning was increased. By imperceptible degrees the crèche developed into a school; and Robert Owen decided to place it under the charge of a master.

The First Head Teacher

It thus happened that the first head teacher of an infant school was a man—a Mr. Buchanan. In the year 1816 (the year after Waterloo) the school was in full swing, and was visited by Lord Brougham, who was much impressed by what he saw. A Society for Promoting Infant Education was formed, a Model Infant School was established at Brewer's Green, London, and Mr. Buchanan was transferred from Lanark to take charge of it.

So well did this new school flourish, that a similar one was opened at Spitalfields. To find a suitable master was a difficult problem, and Mr. Buchanan, who was entrusted with the task, chose a young clerk called Wilderspin, mainly on the ground that Mr. Wilderspin had visited the Brewer's Green school and had shown an extraordinary interest in the children. The appointment of Mr. Wilderspin marks an epoch in infant education.

Pioneer Work

If Buchanan was the St. Peter of the movement, Wilderspin was the St. Paul. He developed a system of his own, and published an account of it. He became an infant school missionary. He travelled all over the United Kingdom, lecturing on his system and establishing schools here, there, and everywhere. For the merest pittance he would run the new school for almost six weeks, until pupils and teachers were made familiar with the infant school system. He would then leave it to develop itself. It is recorded that he thus put into operation over three hundred infant schools.

It is interesting to note that the social conditions which brought the infant school into existence early in the nineteenth century, were

repeated early in the twentieth century, when the nursery school was brought into existence. What the Napoleonic War achieved for the infant school, the Great War of 1914-18 brought about for the nursery school.

In the Wilderspin Days

Wilderspin's schools, much as they were admired in their day as examples of enlightened education, differed in essentials from infants' schools of to-day. They allowed for singing, for the concrete illustration of lessons, for physical exercises and for recreation; but the whole school was held in one large room; the only adults were the head master and his wife, and the lessons were given by young children acting as monitors. In fact, the children were taught by other children.

In a book called *Infant Education*, edited and published by W. & R. Chambers in 1835, the following paragraph appeared under the heading "The Teacher."

This is a better name than *master*, for it is more accordant with the friendly spirit of the system. A male teacher is decidedly preferable to a female, from that greater power of character in the man which the children instinctively feel, and to which they more unhesitatingly defer. But to a well-conducted infant school, both a master and a mistress are indispensable, and in every view it is desirable that they should be man and wife.

The modern reader will violently dissent from some of the sentiments expressed in this passage, no less than from those expounded in the following: "The lessons are never continued too long, seldom beyond an hour." "Nothing is easier for the teacher, or more interesting to the pupil, than the conveyance of a knowledge of grammar incidentally in the course of reading, or even at play." "When they (the children) read they should be exercised in *parsing*; and should be occasionally tried with bad grammar, that they may detect it."

Child Monitors

The Wilderspin school was held in one large room at the end of which was a gallery capable of seating the whole school. In front of the gallery stood a "rostrum," or small platform, which held two or three children who acted as monitors. A rail had to be put round the rostrum

to prevent the embryonic teachers from tumbling off. Then there were movable "lesson posts" 4 ft. high, arranged at regular intervals round the room and serving as supports for boards or lesson charts.

From Wilderspin to Froebel

Thus the infant school began, even as the elementary school began, as a monitorial school. In 1846 the monitorial system began to give way to the pupil teacher system. But the school was still conducted by one adult, or at most two. The class teachers were no longer children of school age, but youths and maidens in their teens.

It was not until the school boards were established in 1870 that the schools began to consist of a number of separate classrooms; and even then the change from the one-roomed school to the modern many-roomed school was slow and uncertain. And the change from the child class-teacher to the adult class-teacher was equally tardy.

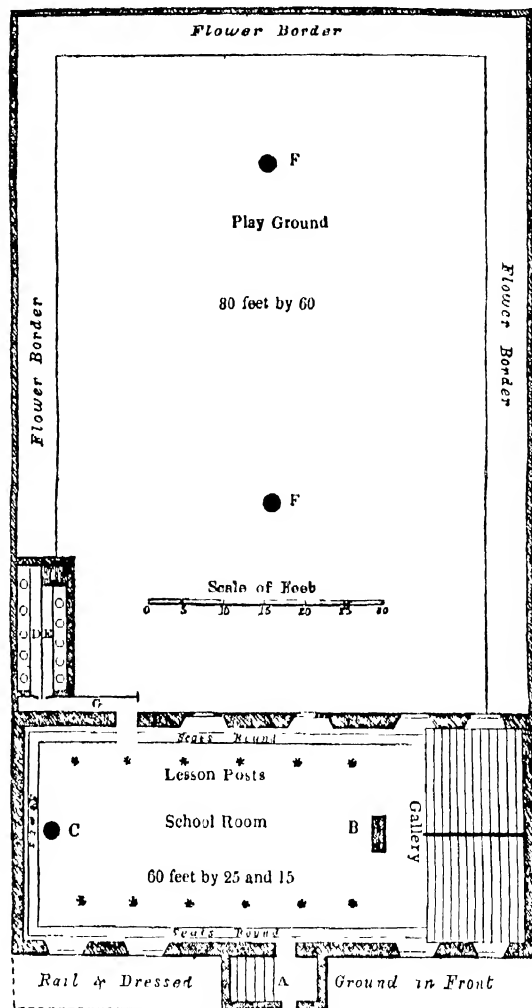
It was, however, in the curriculum and in the methods of teaching that the more essential improvements took place. The instinctive interests of young children, and their intellectual limitations, had been very imperfectly understood. Wilderspin tried to teach geometrical figures (his syllabus contains the parabola), weights and measures (including firkins and kilderkins); notation up to trillions; and other preposterous things now known to be wholly beyond the capacities of young children under seven. In fact the infants were taught precisely the same things as the seniors, though in smaller doses; and, what was worse, were taught them in almost exactly the same way. They walked along the same road, though they did not go the same distance. The profound change that soon began to appear was due to the gradual infiltration into the school of Froebel's teachings.

Charles Dickens Introduces Friedrich Froebel

Though his system first reached England in 1854, and in the following year Charles Dickens wrote an article on it in *Household Words*, it

was some time before any serious impression was made on the infant school—a fact which is illustrated by the following incident.

Some time in the 'Seventies, the School



Reproduced by the courtesy of the I. C. C., from the Council's Annual Report, 1925

FIG. I

Plan of a Wilderspin Infant School, as given in Chambers' "Infant Education" (1835). Above the schoolroom was the Teacher's House

A The porch B, The rostrum. C The stove D, Girls' offices E, Boys' offices G Covered way to offices FF, Gymnastic swing posts

Board for London interviewed six candidates for the post of Inspector, and questioned them about the Kindergarten system. The successful candidate assured me, many years after, that not

one of the six had any idea what the word *Kindergarten* meant. Indeed, it was not till near the close of the nineteenth century that the more humane methods of Froebel found their way into the infant schools of this country, and it was not till the twentieth century had dawned that the school gained its modern atmosphere of freedom and happiness.

The Child as Distinct from an Adult

It was gradually realized that a child is not a man in miniature; that he differs from the adult in his likes and dislikes, in his mode of learning, and his rate of learning; and that the methods of the lecture room are quite unsuited for the infant school. Above all, children's love of activity and of manual pursuits began to receive recognition. The silent mirthless school of the past changed into a place of happy industry, where laughter was not unheard, and where speech, or even noise (within orderly bounds), were welcomed and encouraged.

Kindergarten gifts and occupations were introduced, games and story-telling became an integral part of the curriculum, and bodily exercises of all kinds were abundantly practised. The galleries were removed, and small tables and chairs began to take the place of desks. Less and less insistence was placed upon the three R's, and more and more upon good social and personal habits, and upon dexterity in the use of the hand and of the tongue. Froebel's doctrine of *learning through play* had at last captured the infant school.

From Froebel to Montessori

In the second decade of the twentieth century a new influence made itself felt. The fame of Dr. Montessori and her system reached England about 1912. A few isolated attempts were then made to put some of her principles into practice. Finally the Dottorissa herself came here and explained her methods in courses of lectures, and though her didactic apparatus was rarely used in its original and approved form, and her system was never adopted in its purity and its entirety, her general principles made a profound impression upon the infant school.

The two great contributions of the Montessori system are supposed to be free discipline and individual methods. Free discipline, however, had already gained a considerable vogue in England before Montessori was heard of; and what was received from Montessori was a new justification and impulsion. Although she did not originate free discipline in England, she imparted to the movement an overwhelming impetus.

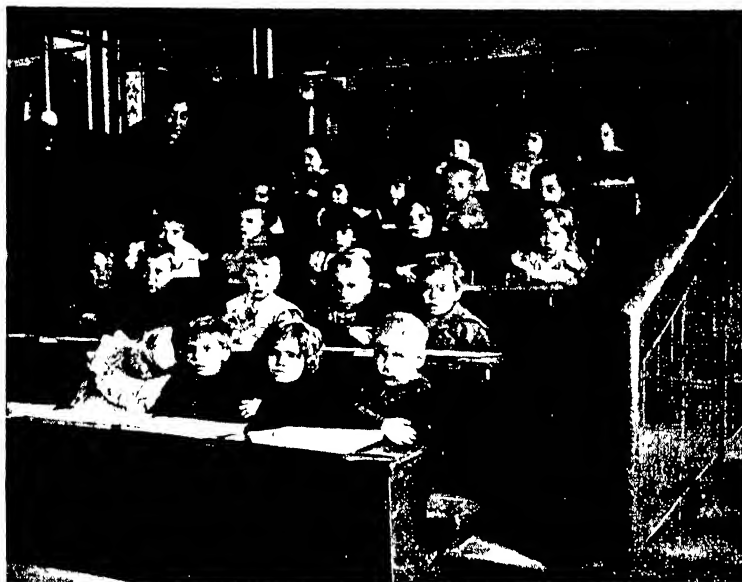
The Principle of Individual Work

The real contribution of Montessori to infant education in England is *individual work*—a contribution the importance of which it is impossible to overrate. It revolutionized the work of the infant school in a dozen years. From the infant school of Wilderspin where the school session resolved itself either into a public meeting with the audience seated in a gallery, or a number of small groups round a lesson-post where a child who knew his lesson parrot-fashion tried to impart it to other children who did not wish to learn it—from the Wilderspin school to the modern infant school is a very far cry.

It must not be thought that there has been a complete supersession of one system by another—that Wilderspin gave place to Froebel, and Froebel to Montessori—but rather that the modern infant school has absorbed and retained elements from each of the three systems, and has evolved into an institution with a distinctive character of its own. Its stability is merely relative. It has many of its problems yet unsolved. Its future is uncertain. Its very life as a separate school has been threatened from two quarters. The new type of school organization threatens it from above; the nursery school from below. As shown hereafter, however, the infant school has enough vitality to survive these menaces.

The Place of the Three R's

The place of the three R's in the infant school has never been finally settled. Before the advent of Montessori methods, professional opinion was strongly drifting towards the view that no formal instruction in the three R's should be given



By courtesy of

The London County Council

FIG. 2

Oratory School, Chelsea. Infants' Gallery Class in 1905



By courtesy of

The London County Council

FIG. 3

Oratory School, Chelsea. Corresponding Class in 1925

before the child was six years of age. Some preferred fixing the lower limit at seven. It was believed that early instruction positively injured the child's mind.

It must be remembered, however, that instruction in those days was wholly collective. Children learned to read, to write, and to cipher more painfully and more laboriously than they do to-day. Experiments with individual methods have shown that these subjects, instead of being distasteful to children, can become fascinating to them and can attract them by their own intrinsic charm. The question of to-day has consequently changed its form. It is no longer "Does early instruction dull the mind?" but, "May not the minds of young children be more profitably employed in gaining first-hand acquaintance with their physical and social environment, than in acquiring an instrument of knowledge which presupposes such acquaintance?"

Extent of the Child's Experience

The meaning the child can put into the words he reads depends upon the extent of his own experience. Poverty of experience—immediate personal experience—cannot be compensated for by wide reading. If a young child, whether in the home, the street, the fields, or the school, has a sufficient variety of new experiences to keep him interested and busy, it does not matter if he does not acquire the art of reading and writing till he is seven or eight years of age. Indeed, it may be better he should not; for the time and labour spent in acquiring such arts would necessarily mean less time spent in storing his fresh young mind with new experiences. So, an early learning to read is still open to criticism; not on the ground that it is harmful in itself, but that it excludes something which is more valuable.

An Educational Utopia

It is impossible, however, in modern conditions of schooling to provide the necessary surroundings. If each infant school had a large garden, a pond, and a grove; if, from the school, could be witnessed the main occupations of

mankind; if social intercourse with a number of people of different ages and different races were possible within the school walls—to teach the pupils of the school to read would be a wicked waste of time.

But our schools do not offer enough intellectual grist of this sort for the young minds to grind. And to be intellectually unemployed means boredom—even to young children.

Hence, in the absence of intellectual stimulus coming from the world of real things and real people, we provide another kind of stimulus. We give the children's minds something difficult to grapple with. We let them learn the three R's, fortified in the belief that it will at least do them no harm. And it will save labour later on.

Even so, the question is not finally settled. We do not know at what age a child may most easily and most pleasantly acquire the arts of reading, writing, and counting. It is probably more difficult to learn these things after the age of eight than before the age of eight. But even this is not certain. For the children who are actually over eight before they can read are, as a rule, stupid children who have tried to learn at an earlier age and have failed to do so. And from these cases we can draw no general conclusions.

The Main Purpose

There is one conclusion, however, with which all modern educationists will agree, and this is that the study of the three R's should not absorb the larger portion of the school time. The main purpose of the infant school is to teach good habits. The children should learn to play, to dance, to sing, to speak, and to use their fingers usefully. They should acquire habits of cleanliness, of courtesy, of kindness, and of industry.

They should learn to control themselves and to have consideration for others. They should live a happy and seemly life together, forming a little community which embodies the pleasanter features of the larger community to which their parents belong. In fact, the children should, even in school, *live wisely and well in order to learn wisely and well.*

Acquiring Habits of Speech

The old-time infant school was, as far as the children were concerned, a place for listening, not for speaking. The teacher did all the speaking. The children were never allowed to speak except to reply to a question asked by the teacher, or to ask an urgent question of the teacher. To talk to one another was forbidden. It is now seen that this prohibition puts an unreasonable check upon a child's natural impulses, and impedes the normal development of his mind. And it violates the principle that a child learns by doing.

But then it was never, in those days, believed that it was the business of the school to teach speech. It was assumed that the home did that, and did it effectively. It was not suspected that there was a close connection between clear speaking and clear thinking. It was not recognized that the very attempt of the child to express himself in articulate speech tended to organize his ideas and to foster the growth and expansion of his mental powers.

It is all recognized now. It is now regarded as one of the prime functions of the infant school to cultivate clear, definite articulation, and to give practice in speaking the mother tongue.

Often a Difficult Task

Sometimes the task is neglected on account of its difficulty. When a child enters school speaking a jargon which is almost unintelligible, as sometimes happens in London, the teacher feels hopeless. She feels that the forces of the home and the street all work against her, and in the long run are sure to win. It is not that the accent is Cockney, for the Cockney accent may be as definite and clear-cut, as articulate and intelligible, as any other accent; but that the very utterance is bad. The words are not clearly minted. Even the bad grammar is badly spoken. It sometimes resembles barking or gargling almost as much as it resembles human speech. And in this fact lies the hope of remedy.

The problem is not so much to do something which is different from what is done at home, but to do well what is done at home badly. To eliminate the Cockney pronunciation and the Cockney intonation need not be the aim;

but rather to use the vocal organs competently, to speak words "trippingly on the tongue," and to bring out in some measure the beauty and value of human speech. This the infant teachers are now doing—and in many instances doing it with signal success.

The Importance of Handwork

The young child expresses himself through his hands as well as through his tongue. But until the influence of Froebel was felt in the school, the expressive side of education was neglected. Even the Kindergarten gifts and occupations which formed part of Froebel's system were soon seen to lack the expressive spirit. They were formal and academic. They were carried out collectively and at the dictation of the teacher.

The absence of spontaneity and creative effort caused the more enterprising infant teachers to discard the Froebelian occupations and substitute handwork of a more expressive and more constructive kind. Dr. John Dewey's criticisms were taken to heart, and an attempt was made to bring the handwork in the infant school more closely into contact with genuine human occupations.

The great fundamental industries of mankind, such as gardening, weaving, modelling in clay and other plastic material, architecture, and domestic work, all found some sort of representative in the school curriculum. Drawing ceased to be geometrical and formal, and became a free expression of the child's imagination. In fact, the arts and crafts began to take their true part in the education of the young.

Didactic Apparatus as Opposed to Handwork

With the introduction of Montessori methods—an event which almost coincided with the beginning of the first Great War—constructive handwork received a set-back. Not only was material for handwork difficult to secure, but the enthusiasm for the new didactic apparatus made it easy to neglect the old form of handwork. As the teachers were forced to be off with the old love, they were glad to be on with the new. The war, in fact, proved favourable

to individual work with apparatus, and unfavourable to constructive handwork.

As the pressure of war conditions passed away, constructive handwork crept back into the infant school; and the amount subsequently practised, though not perhaps so great as before the war, was probably as much as the competing claims of other pursuits would reasonably permit.

Between the Two World Wars

The period 1918-39 was a season of steady recovery. The privations due to the first Great War were nothing like as great as those due to the second, and the twenties and thirties of this century saw a rapid restoration of the amenities of the infant school. At the end of that period infant education was probably in as flourishing a state as it ever had been.

The new type of school organization recommended in the Hadow Report (1926) involved a break at the age of eleven, and fears were expressed that this would mean the extinction of the infant school as a separate department. These fears were groundless. A later Educational Pamphlet issued by the Board of Education (*The New Prospect in Education*) made it quite clear that the Board favoured a retention of the infant school.

The Effect of the Second World War

Bad as was the effect of the first World War on the education of infants, that of the second World War was incomparably worse. It was catastrophic. The aerial bombardment of London and other large towns made it necessary to close most of the town schools and remove the children to temporary and makeshift schools in the country. It was necessary to find not only school accommodation for them but board and lodgings as well. The difficulties were enormous. Proper premises were so scarce that any sort of facilities were eagerly snapped up. The unity and continuity of town schools were destroyed, and the organization of country schools was seriously disturbed. Staffs were depleted, and the stock of school materials fell dangerously

low. Teachers carried on as best they could. The whole thing was a tragic interruption in the natural development of the infant school. When the war was over the evacuated children returned; but not to such good conditions as before. The losses of the past, however, are gradually being made good. And though the material amenities will take a long time to restore, there is no falling off in purpose or in aspiration. The infant school is steadily forging ahead.

The Nursery School

When Miss Margaret McMillan opened the first nursery school at Deptford in 1913, many looked upon the adventure as quixotic, or at least experimental. But the nursery school has by this time spread all over the country, and has manifestly come to stay. Moreover it has had no slight influence on the work of the infant school—an influence wholly beneficial. For in the nursery school “chalk and talk” are impossible, and “the 3 R’s” are anathema, all of which are replaced by education through play and self-activity, and direct experience of the basic pursuits of the human race. Indeed the more recent aspirations of the infant school have not been towards the junior school, but towards the nursery school. And it is no longer possible to regard the nursery school as a mere social convenience for the relief of over-worked mothers, but as an educational necessity for children of all social grades.

A nursery school may be looked upon as an ideal infant school. It was so regarded by that pioneer of genius, Margaret McMillan. She did not consider it as preliminary to the infant school but as a substitute for it, and indeed for the elementary school from beginning to end. It provided the ideal nurture and the ideal training. But, alas, there are difficulties in the way—difficulties of a financial nature—which, for the present at any rate, removes such a scheme from the realm of practical politics. The nursery school, therefore, has to stand as an object lesson, as a model of what the infant school is moving towards as fast and as far as the powers that be will permit.

How nursery schools have developed of late

years and what they are at present doing are brought out in the article by Miss E. Stevinson, who so ably carries on Miss McMillan's work at Deptford. She describes a noteworthy extension of the work in the Margaret McMillan House at Wrotham, which provides a country camp for a town nursery school.

Nursery classes are important, but they



FIG. 4

The twins before entering the Nursery School

embody no new principle. They represent an attempt to reproduce nursery school conditions within the narrow confines of old-fashioned premises. As such they are deserving of encouragement. They are a move in the right

direction. They are the half-loaf which is better than no bread.

The three photographs which, through the kindness of Dr. C. J. Thomas of the L.C.C. Public Health Department, I am able to get reproduced here, speak more eloquently than any words of mine of the boon conferred by the nursery school upon the children of the poor. The twins shown in the first photograph (Fig. 4), which was taken before their entrance to the Nursery School, are seen again, in the two photographs (Fig. 5), as they appeared after they had been at the school a month.

The Nursery School a Separate Entity

Fears have been expressed that the nursery school will in course of time supersede the infant school. These fears are again groundless. The nursery school ages are from two to five. A child has therefore to leave the nursery school before his attendance at an infant school begins—before it compulsorily begins, at any rate. Moreover, the nursery school is, as a rule, more expensive than the infant school; it needs more space, it needs more teachers, it needs more equipment. For some years to come, the nursery school will, it is feared, do little more than supply the more pressing social needs of the most congested areas in great cities.

Where light, air, food, and parental care are



FIG. 5

After one month at the Nursery School

most obviously lacking, there nursery schools are likely to spring up. They serve yet another purpose: they present models for the new infant schools to imitate. Nursery schools will thus help to reform the material amenities of the infant schools—help to make the older schools healthier and brighter and happier—but there is

reflected in the infant school. The school becomes a laboratory in which new ideas and new methods are put to the test of practical experience.

And the teachers are extraordinarily patient and open-minded. More than that, they are keen; they are actively interested; they will

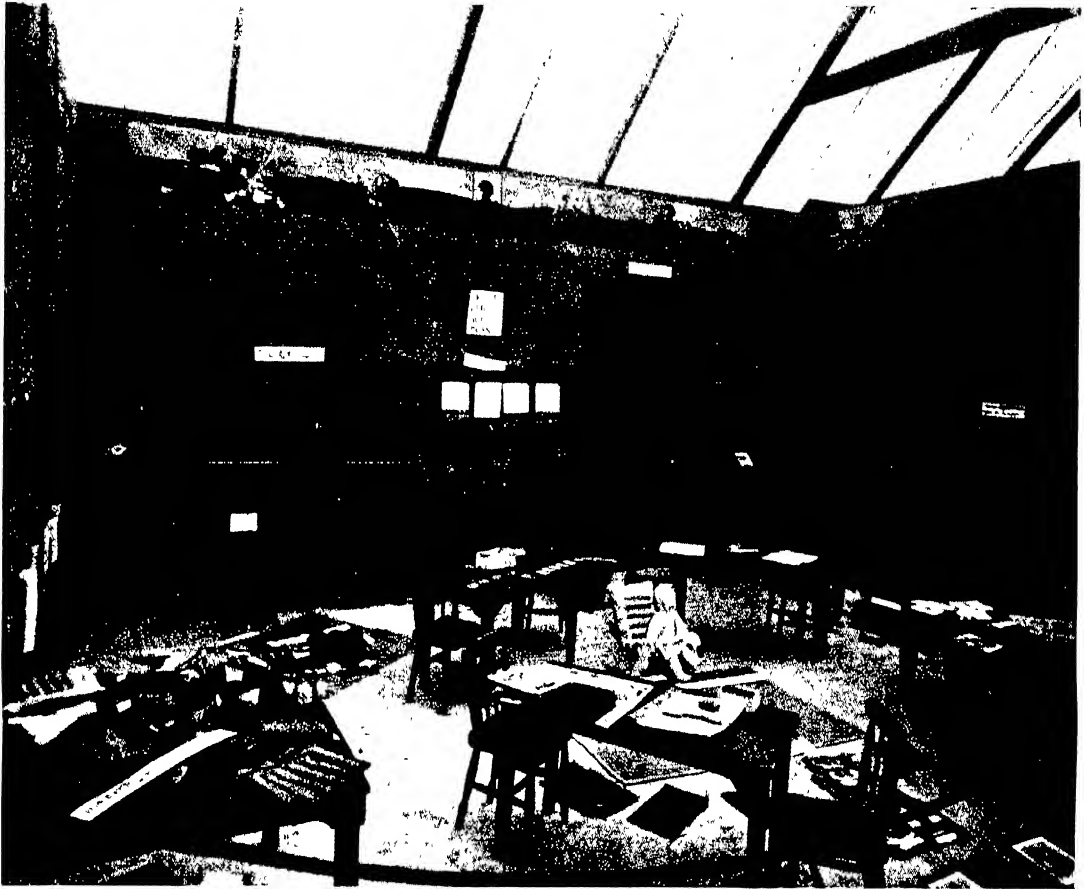


FIG. 6

The Infant Room of To-day—A Place of Happy Industry

no likelihood of then rendering infant schools unnecessary.

The Infant School as an Educational Laboratory

A salient trait in the infant school is its sensitiveness to change in the educational atmosphere. Any change of heart or of head in those who theorize about education is at once

attended in large crowds an educational meeting where there is a prospect of learning "a better way"; they will work themselves to a shadow in preparing material or apparatus that has any likelihood of brightening the lives or the brains of their young charges.

It sometimes happens that they follow a false scent, that they try methods which prove inferior to the older methods. But this is inevitable if the experiment is a true experiment.

For an experiment that never fails is no experiment at all. Besides, the successes are more frequent than the failures, and they constitute the core of what we mean by "modern method." The infant schools, in fact, and the nursery schools, are the pioneer schools of England

A Summary and a Survey

The infant school is just over a hundred years old. For the first half of that period it was provided, and almost wholly maintained, by

their natural impulses, so far as these impulses are good, and do not interfere with the liberties of others, but they are taught to check those impulses when they are likely to prove harmful to themselves or to their comrades. They are, in fact, led to control themselves. Authoritative control is regarded as a temporary substitute for self-control, and it is not maintained any longer than is necessary to nurse the higher kind of control. This is what is meant by saying that the discipline of the infant school is "free."



FIG. 7

Individual Work

voluntary means. During the second half it has formed part of the nation's system of elementary education, and has been supported by public funds. Its main aims have been—

1. To foster the healthy growth of the child's mind and body.
2. To cultivate good habits of speech and of conduct.
3. To produce a favourable attitude towards the school community and the school pursuits.
4. To lay the foundations of those branches of study which will be more systematically followed in the senior school.

And these aims are carried out in an atmosphere of happiness and goodwill. The school is ruled by love, not by fear. The children follow

It is discipline which maintains a difficult and precarious mean between rigidity on the one hand and looseness on the other.

Preparation for Junior School

The extent to which the infant school should prepare for the academic work of the senior school has always been a controversial question. In practice, it is decided partly by the general policy of the local authority, and partly by agreement between the head teachers concerned. And in the present state of educational science this is about as far as we can go. We cannot, at present, say what an average child of seven should know and what he should not know.

The illustrations on these pages are in

themselves clear evidence of the advance that has taken place since infant schools were first founded. The plan of the Wilderspin school shows how far behind we were in 1835. The two photographs of the Oratory School, Chelsea (photographs which we reproduce here by the courtesy of the L.C.C. from the Annual Report of the Council, 1925), show how much change could take place in twenty years. (*See Figs. 2 and 3.*)

To quote from my own contribution to that Report: "The picture with a gallery and the

picture with tables and chairs, both representing children of the same age in the same school, but separated by a gulf of twenty years, tell their tale of change from passivity to activity, from listening to doing, from discipline imposed from without to discipline directed from within, from distasteful tasks to joyous undertakings, from simultaneous work to individual study, from the closed classroom to the open air and the sunshine; in fine, from an atmosphere of restriction and toil to an atmosphere of reasonable freedom, cheerful work, and childish happiness "

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

SYSTEMATIC studies, carried out during the last decades, have given a scientific basis to our knowledge of children's development. Although this knowledge is still very incomplete, it has brought about fundamental changes in our approach to education, and will continue to do so as further research work gradually fills the gaps. It is therefore of the greatest importance for anyone working with children to be familiar with the most essential findings in the field of Child Development.

Norms of physical and mental growth have now been established and take the place of arbitrary judgment. Understanding of the forces within the child help us to see the motives for his behaviour, which, without such knowledge, often seem quite irrational and are therefore likely to arouse in the adult undue criticism or anger. The study of the child's ways of thinking has given us a deeper understanding of his picture of the world, and of the role we have to play in helping him to learn about the things around him. Observations of responses to other people show us how we can help him to find his place among them. And from all this slowly emerges the knowledge of the conditions most favourable for the child's healthy physical and mental development and the prevention of malformations and maladjustment.

The Teacher's Approach

In the light of this knowledge we can see the fundamental transformation of the teacher's task. While formerly the subject to be taught and the method by which to impart the given knowledge were her main concern, it is now the child himself, with his individual characteristics, who takes first place in her work. The age at which teaching was to be started, and the kind and amount of knowledge to be taught, were previously determined by the desire to make the child accept grown-up standards as quickly as possible. Now each child's own interests and his initiative are given first place. Individual

differences are no longer regarded as a hindrance rather than an advantage, the child's spontaneous questions and communications are encouraged.

The teacher's skill is no longer measured by her success in bringing all children to the same standard in a given time.

Teachers who have followed recent developments in the field of Child Study now recognize that, far from being uniform, their work has to be varied and flexible in order to meet the needs of each child in the group. They realize that by keeping in touch with the basic findings about children's development, they are able to form clearer judgments of the children they teach, and to decide in what way their own skill and guidance can be used to the children's best advantage.

One of the most essential things to be realized is the fact that development is a continuous process. To understand a child when he enters school, to define what his individual needs are, we must be aware of the importance of what has gone before. Many teachers have not been able to gain first-hand experience of babies and toddlers, those who have done so have often stressed how much their understanding of the older child has been helped by this experience.

It is with this fact in view that the following brief account of the main trends of development from birth is given.

Earliest Developments

When the baby has ceased to be actually part of his mother, his need for close and repeated physical contact with her continues for several months. This physical link is most naturally maintained through breast-feeding. The need for the mother's breast is the need not only for the food she can give but for just that bodily contact it provides for the child during the first months of his existence. The child's life begins in this close relationship. His utter dependence on the mother, and her loving response to him, form his first experiences of the world. The

satisfaction he is given, or the frustration he has to tolerate, from the very beginning will influence his later feelings about himself and the world around him. His capacity to love, his urge to hate are given their foundation in this early close relationship. Where breast-feeding is

damaged. He finds satisfaction mainly through his mouth, not only through the intake of food as such but by the pleasurable sensation sucking provides and the comfort he gains from it. Sucking is one of the child's ways of dealing with his feeling of inner tension. Attempts at forcing



FIG. 1

Confidence in Physical Control

impossible the mother knows well how to compensate for this special loving care during the feeding times.

Urgency of Needs

A baby's needs are few but intense. He demands immediate satisfaction, and he can bear only a small degree of frustration without being

the child into a strict feeding routine that is not in accordance with his own rhythm, or restriction of sucking at this early stage, are therefore harmful.

Gradually, as the child grows up, his capacity to wait for his satisfaction increases. Thus, when most five-year-olds come to school, they are able to control their wishes to some extent, and can accept reasonable demands to wait, to take

turns, or to share. Teachers are of course acquainted with the occasional child who still demands immediate satisfaction of his wishes, as in babyhood, and who reacts to any refusal with an outburst of temper. This is the child who has not felt sufficiently secure in his early

in the pre-school years, only by her patient reassurance can she prove to the child that there is no need to mistrust her. It is she who provides the fresh element in his life, giving him the chance to confirm or deny the first pictures he has formed of the people in his world.



FIG. 2

The Search for Knowledge

life to achieve confidence in the people around him, and through them, in himself. When the teacher refuses a request, such a child is reminded of earlier rejections, and reacts therefore with emotion that is quite out of proportion to the experience of the present. Because the role which the teacher has to play in the child's emotional life partly depends on his experiences

The Growth of Perception

The baby's intellectual and physical life, as well as his emotional life, begins in the early relationship with his mother. He learns to find and recognize the breast. He gains his first muscular control in his gropings, and in his early inter-play with her. He learns to know



FIG. 3
Exploration of the Physical World

her facial expressions, and later to imitate the movements she makes and the sounds he hears. Before he is a year old, he can clap his hands in response, and can make at will sounds that are the foundations of his later speech. Both these activities begin as a response to the familiar in his world. For this reason, the child outside the normal home, handled by a variety of adults, is usually less advanced in his social beginnings.

Gradually, as his sensory powers develop, the child begins to know more things around him. In the course of his first year he learns to recognize the objects and people that are important to him. He can reach out for what he wants, he slowly gains some control over space through his self-directed movements of crawling and his first steps. He explores the shape and the feel of things through his senses, and his experience of movement, and the mastery it brings, also play an important part in his emotional life. The effects of early freedom of movement can also be seen in the degree of confidence in the physical control the child shows in his later childhood days. Conversely, where there has been early restriction we find not only that his physical development is affected, but also that he is mentally and emotionally blunted, and unable to make full use of the opportunities that may be given to him later. Such children may be warped in their character formation, and have lost the urge to make an effort. Teachers are familiar with this condition in later schooldays, and know how difficult it is to arouse the interest of a child who has been subject to this early disability.

One of the child's difficulties may have been caused by the frequent demand for the control of his bladder and bowels, long before he is able physically, intellectually, and emotionally to cope with it. Few children are in fact able to achieve full control before they are two; but, long before then, mother and nurses usually start making demands on the child that represent serious frustrations, and are responded to with defiance and obstinacy. An element of disapproval is thus introduced into the mother-child relationship, which sometimes develops into an open battle just at the time when the child most needs the mother's loving support in his efforts to become an independent being.

Similar difficulties may have occurred in the child's acquisition of more grown-up feeding habits. As in toilet training, mothers often insist on their own standards of cleanliness at mealtimes, regardless of the child's needs and abilities. For this reason they may treat the child as a passive recipient of food long after he would enjoy experimenting in feeding himself. Nursery School Teachers will recognize the differences between active and passive feeders and their characteristic modes of enjoying food. Mealtimes for the child should mean more than just intake of nourishment. They give emotional satisfaction through the relationship with the grown-up who provides the food, social experience in sharing the mealtime with others, and aesthetic enjoyment in the variety of tastes and features of food. It is unnecessary to remind teachers of young children of the importance of attractive serving of food and the maintenance of a serene and friendly mealtime atmosphere.

The Child Becomes a Separate Person

The mother remains the centre of the young child's world. There is, of course, a very real stage in separation at the time of weaning, and if this has not been treated with understanding, it may result in later difficulties. Around eighteen months, the child, of his own free will, has the courage to move away from his mother for short periods though needing to come back for repeated reassurance. He gets interested in people, but his relationships with them remain experimental. When we approach a child of this age, he may, for no obvious reason, greet us with a beaming smile or respond with a sudden, anxious retreat.

The Father

By this time the father has become an important person in his life. The child early feels the importance of the father, in relation both to himself and to his mother. He may often find himself striving for the sole possession of one or the other parent. The solution of these complicated feelings is different in boys and girls, and is greatly influenced by the parents' relationship



FIG. 4
Experimenting



FIG. 5
Meal-time with Others

to each other, and the wisdom with which the child is treated by both parents. The father in the family usually stands for authority, even in these early stages, or is used as such by the mother: "What will Daddy say?"

In his later character development, the boy normally wants to become like this strong father,

difficult to know how much, even at this early age, these sudden attacks are in fact a defence against the child's fear of being attacked by his companion. These early emotional relationships have a primitive all-or-none quality, fluctuating quickly from one extreme to the other, and are often apparently indiscriminating in their aim.



FIG. 6

Helping One Another

and has to adjust himself to the fact that he is now so small and weak compared with him. The girl, usually wanting to become like the mother, develops a loving relationship with the father and copies, but also envies, the mother's role.

Other Children

The child now shows real pleasure in meeting other small children, but at this stage he uses them for his own purposes. He may alternately show affection, hostility, or indifference. It is

That outbursts of sudden anger reach their peak around the age of two, systematic studies have shown. At this age the urgency of feelings determines the child's behaviour. Self-control, as we know it later on, has hardly begun. Much help has to be given to the toddler before he is able to achieve the consistent, sympathetic sharing, helping, and mutual appreciation to be found in the well-adjusted school child. Lapses from this later friendly adjustment may often be understood as a return, under conditions of stress, to the rapid changes of love and hate of earlier

stages of development, and the child needs all the love we can give him.

Living Together

The beginnings of this give-and-take, of the sharing of feelings and experience, can be seen around the age of two years. Two children may join in building a brick tower, each putting on



FIG. 7

See What I Can Do!

his bricks; they may sit filling the same bucket with sand. But it is probably only when they are nearing three that they come to feel their way into the realization that the other child feels, in some way, as they do themselves. This comes first through the sharing of their fantasies in play. This joining becomes so important to the child of three that he craves for other children to share his play. This togetherness extends into every activity. The children like to eat together, to sleep next to each other, to wash at the same time, and find similarities in their clothes. It is normal for friendships at this age to be easily

made and remade, though stable attachments can sometimes be found.

Some of the difficulties that may occur, when the child is entering the Infant School, can be related to his having passed through the pre-school years without having had the appropriate opportunities to mix with other children and gradually develop the capacity to be a member of a group. This first mixing is more difficult at a later age when the personality has become more defined.

The Growing Importance of Speech

By the age of three the monosyllabic beginnings found in the child's early relationships have grown into a social and emotional tool of great importance to the child. Although speech is still loosely linked with activity, and still used chiefly to describe concrete situations, it has also an essential value in the release of feelings and the formulation of problems.

We realize how important it is for the young child to talk about what he is doing. When we see the hampering effect that enforced silence has on him, often inhibiting his activities and usually making him irritable, it is hard to believe that it is such a short time since it was assumed that children can learn better in silence than when free to exchange ideas, ask questions, demand help and appreciation, or formulate their difficulties in words.

At this stage words are played with, and have special values. The use of new words and the construction of long sentences is not only experienced as an intellectual achievement, but also gives emotional satisfaction to the child. The child is still learning the muscular habits of speech, and has a joy in these quite apart from their meaningful use. This can be observed in the way in which children of this age can revel in nonsense patter amongst themselves, passing a new word from one to the other, adding new combinations of sounds in endless repetition. Comparable to this is the pleasure in nursery rhymes and jingles.

As speech becomes familiar the finer shades of meaning become important, and language is utilized for the more complex thought processes. This elaboration of language goes hand in hand

with the developing intelligence of the child. It slowly begins to supplement thought. Expression in words takes precedence over manipulation of concrete material, which in the early period was his only means of problem solving. The need for language is especially evident in the development of logical reasoning. Through language he gives expression to his need for

the child the courage to persist in his search for knowledge. His curiosity shows itself first in his interest in his own body and those of other people, and the bodily functions. Rebuke, or lack of co-operation, or evasion from adults in these first inquiries, hampering his clarity of thought, may be held responsible for later lack of interest and inability to think to full capacity.



FIG. 8

Painting Lurid Pictures

explanation of how things are connected. He wants to know such things as why the water runs down the pipe at the plug, why it is good for him to drink milk, where his mother is going. By formulating these questions into words he not only tries to acquire knowledge, but relieves his tension of feelings in situations that are puzzling or frustrating to him.

The Value of Curiosity

In his early questions we have the opportunity either to encourage the child to move easily from one discovery to the next, or to restrict his desire to explore further, by the attitude we take in answering his questions. Our readiness to help when called upon gives

It is the continued parental interest in his explorations of the physical world that gives the child the incentive to go on finding out. This desire to know is basic for his later school learning, and the teacher cannot succeed without it. The teacher in the school to-day has to be alert to use this curiosity, and to provide means for the child to take the next step. In this way the child's urge to know is kept alive in his further search for knowledge.

In children who have been intellectually blunted the teacher has to find ways of re-awakening the feeling of urgency to know. It cannot be stressed too often that the whole of early infant learning must continually be referred back to the concrete situation. The

child thinks first in things, though he may express these thoughts in words. Before he had the words he knew the things. For a long time manipulation of concrete material remains the basis of his thinking. The teacher receiving five-year-olds into the Infant School will find

condition in the early years. The role language plays and the consequent facility in words acquired by the child varies a great deal according to his home background. Also the child who feels loved in his home has a greater urge to communicate. The teacher helps or hinders



FIG. 9

Learning to Control the Medium

them at very different levels of linguistic expression. This is sometimes used as a superficial assessment of the child's intelligence. But although there is a close relationship between intelligence and language generally, it is important not to underestimate the influence of the child's home background and of his emotional

linguistic development by the degree to which she is capable of being an interested and sympathetic listener.

The Child's Need of Appreciation

From the very beginning the baby loves to be watched. At six months he will kick harder

when displaying his kicking to an appreciative audience; later, at about eighteen months, he likes to strut round with no clothes on delighting in displaying his body. Later this may be put into words, as in the child who, proudly walking round before his bath, pats himself and chants: "Me got a tummy." His joy in bodily exhibitionism—"See what I can do"—soon develops into a further joy in decoration: "Me got a ribbon;" and later in the joy in clothes: "Look at my new socks, my red shoes too."

Adults know how to use this instinctive pleasure in display for the purpose of encouraging children to take pride in their appearance. "What a nice clean boy you are!" But there are times when parents, in their joy in the beauty of a child's appearance, may overstress cleanliness to his detriment. Many adults find it difficult to understand that the child in his desire to explore everything around him has no natural dislike of being dirty. He likes to run his fingers along the railings, to draw pictures with his fingers on the railway carriage window, to splash through a muddy puddle. He is only deterred from these pursuits by parental authority.

It is well to remember that the child's joy in such things need not be wasted, but should be used for his creative play, through the use of such materials as sand and water, clay, "Plasticine," etc. It is refreshing to know that all modern Infant Schools provide these materials for free use.

The child's need for appreciation of himself and his possessions soon extends to his achievements, his bodily skill, his knowledge, the things he has made. At no stage in his education can we afford to neglect the importance to him of appreciation. His mud pie must be beautiful to us, so must his pictures, and our approving interest helps him to go further both in his work and in his physical prowess. As he grows up, he demands a discriminating assessment from us rather than the superlative that contented him at first. He asks: "Which do you like best, this picture or that?" assuring himself that he has our full concentrated interest. Later again, we can help him to put his best into his efforts by being discriminating in our expression of appreciation, though carping criticism must always be avoided.

How Play Helps the Child

The child tackles and solves both his problems of outer reality and the problems within himself through his play. Through his senses and in his experimenting with movements he gets to know the world and learns how to control it. The fantasy in his play enables him to re-enact situations that may not have been previously acceptable to him. The healthy child deals with a frightening experience by repeating it often in laboured detail in his play. Thus, for example, the child who has been in hospital may be fixated for a time in his play on the repetition of hospital scenes, often playing the doctor or nurse rather than the patient. The child after experiences of bombing may have an outburst of similar aggression in his breaking down of castles and painting of lurid pictures. In these two examples the child has reversed the role and himself becomes the active party. In such play the healthy child faces his own problems in his own way. He does not have to be taught to do this, but the adult can help or hinder his free expression by the opportunities he provides and the sanctions he gives. The need for provision of such opportunities is to-day generally recognized. We provide our children with sand and water, we give thought to providing the right toy at the right age. Giving sanction to this use of this play material is, however, to many adults far more difficult. The theoretical knowledge of the fact that the child has a need to play messily is easier to accept than the practical consequences of the child indulging in it.

The extent to which the grown-up can readily identify herself with the child's need, feeling it is worth while in spite of the inconvenience, varies with her own early experience. Similarly, giving sanction to the child's expression of aggression in play is more difficult for some adults than others. Indeed, it is a problem for all to know how far a child should be allowed to go, particularly as this may often create real problems in environment.

The expression of the wish to hurt or destroy in words, in fantasy play, in painting is one of the ways the child can satisfy and relieve his anxiety, but to be allowed to do the same in



FIG. 10
Trying to be like Mother



FIG. 11
Working Together

reality destroys his confidence in us and increases his anxiety.

The importance of adult sanction and readiness to help when called upon plays perhaps an even more important role in the childish search for knowledge.

Parents and Teachers Work Together

To-day the opportunities to play as freely in school as he does in his home life bring home and school nearer together for the child. He is living in two separate worlds but it is important for him that they should be joined by friendliness and approval between them. We must realize that this necessity is making demands on both the mother and the teacher. For the mother it means a giving-up of her unique position, a sharing of her intimate knowledge of the child with someone outside the family circle, and possibly the feeling that the privacy of her home is somehow being invaded.

For the teacher it means often extensive demands on both herself and her time. No one must underestimate the extent of these demands.

The old idea of a teacher's task was that she had to impart a certain body of knowledge to a certain number of children in a certain given time. This implied that the teacher had a given skill, and that there was general agreement on what children should be taught. It made no allowance for children's individual differences. There tended to be standards for *all* five-year-olds, standards for *all* six-year-olds.

Because of the detailed knowledge gained from the study of individual children during this century, it is no longer possible for the teacher

to feel that her task is so uniform. She has to recognize that each child has his own particular characteristics, which are a part of him and which she must know in order that her teaching skill shall be used to the fullest advantage. If teaching is considered in the light of this knowledge it will be realized that it now requires the most humanly specialized talents.

No one must underestimate the extent of the demands that are being made on both her knowledge and her personality in this field. She has to know all about the things in the child's school world, as much as she can about the child himself, and something about the home he is coming from. In order to understand the child's behaviour in the school she has to know something of his day-to-day experiences in the home. This she can gain from the child's spontaneous confidences, and her own summing-up of them. The child will tell the friendly teacher the news from home, but she has to know when to encourage him to tell her more. In the light of what she has heard, she is better able to understand his behaviour in school, his attitudes to other children and herself, and the degree of effort he is putting into his school activities. It is not always easy for her to understand each child to this extent, because of the very large number of different backgrounds of the children's parents and often the possibly large gap between their background and hers.

Further, she has the difficult task of understanding the differences she finds between the various children. But she has to appreciate that these are the direct outcome of the very individual five years of life that each child has had, and the varied impressions each has received before entering the Infant School.

HEALTH EDUCATION

BEFORE considering how Health Education can be taught to any specific age group of children, it is necessary to make a survey or plan of how Health Education is built up and developed from babyhood to adulthood. The child goes through countless experiences from his baby's cot, through the weaning stage to his toddlerhood, after which he finds a complete change of environment in the Infant School, and again yet different experiences come to him in his later primary and secondary education. Throughout he is learning a "way of living" and the type of experiences and impressions he receives are vastly important. We hope he may learn a "healthy way of living." Only a small percentage of the nation's children attend nursery schools where, with the co-operation of the home, the foundations for healthy ways of living are laid. No further mention of the aims and purpose of such nursery training will be made here.

Attitude to Health

The vast majority of children start a new experience at the age of four or five years when entering the Infant School. Here the personal aspect of health is the teacher's concern, and at this early age the teacher will try to shift the responsibility of the child's personal habits from the mother to the child. Bit by bit the child learns the reasons for these habits, and when he grows older and reaches the junior department of his primary school, he begins to gain an understanding of health through the biological aspect when he learns about the working of his body; the biological aspect is the foundation of an awareness of the importance of positive health, and finally when he reaches adolescence and young adulthood, he will begin to realize the vital significance of a national health conscience, and this can be termed the social aspect.

Every teacher should have this comprehensive plan before her in the Infant School. It is she,

with the co-operation of the home, who must start to equip each individual in her care with such attitudes towards healthy living that, when he has reached adulthood, he will have passed through the stages of the personal, biological, and social aspects of positive health and will be equipped with such knowledge that he is fully able to take his place as a responsible and thoughtful citizen with a health conscience.

The Personal Approach

Health Education in the Infants' School is something very personal and can only be given through attention to each individual child. Personal habits cannot be taught *en masse*, this is too intimate a matter, and a chance word in passing for Tommy's ear only is of far greater value than a remark to the class. When personal hygiene is stressed to a class full of children it loses its personal touch, and becomes impersonal.

The classroom is the child's world in which he is learning to live; he learns words, he learns how to count, he learns how to make things, and above all he learns how to look after himself, in the daily routine the teacher establishes for the child countless experiences which he collects and stores up in his mind. The child is ready in the Infants' School to receive innumerable impressions, and he wants to share these discoveries with others. A little boy aged three years said, "Auntie, do you know flowers?" He had acquired the knowledge of flowers; do other people know them too? A spirit of wonder is inherent in every child; one of the main duties of a teacher is to keep this spirit alive.

Learning the Nature of Things

Every Infant School should ideally have its pets' corner, a bit of ground for each child to grow anything he chooses, a bit of ground to dig up anything he chooses, a little pool and a sandpit, and in the classroom a nature table with its tadpoles and growing bulbs.

The absorbing interest of watching living

things never flags. Children learn how to care for their pets; they soon get to know that they must be fed, kept clean and warm and have fresh air. Surely here is an opportunity to link up their newly acquired knowledge with their own bodily activities and needs. Incidentally they are learning about the nature of things, which is the basis for later scientific knowledge.

It seems, then, that the task of the Infant School is to guide the child towards a "way of living" that will include health habits with all the other activities of the classroom. This is

teaching, not a timetable lesson; the teacher must have a definite scheme of topics and be clear in her own mind how these are to be presented. Though introduced incidentally, the teaching must not be accidental or haphazard. Too often health teaching is of a negative kind. There is sometimes a tendency to confine teaching largely to reprimands if a child has unpleasant habits. This has little value and only results in the child associating good personal habits with something unpleasant which is to be avoided. The class teacher gener-



FIG. 1

Stimulating an Interest in the Nature of Things

something more subtle than drilling habits into the child; we do not want Tommy to use his handkerchief because the teacher tells him; we want Tommy to experience a personal discomfort if he has a stuffy nose, or if he goes to bed with sticky fingers and an unwashed mouth, and so, prompted by a certain fastidiousness which is gradually developing in him, he finally acquires hygienic habits and a healthy attitude. Hence we must go further than advocating good habits: we must help Tommy to develop a desire for them.

The Teacher's Plan

How, then, should this side of a child's education be approached? It is incidental

ally has the well-being of some forty or fifty children at heart. She wants her classroom to be a healthy place, and she wants the children to be happy and healthy. From the word "Go" she should aim at helping the children to build up a resistance against disease. A great deal is heard nowadays of Specific Immunity and being immunized against diphtheria, but what about General Immunity? It is possible for every individual to build up a General Immunity, that is, a resistance to ill health, gained by taking advantage of the everyday amenities which, broadly speaking, are available to all, these are fresh air, food, water, warmth, sunlight, sleep, exercise, and cleanliness—not that sickness and illness are eradicated thereby, but

by living a healthy life, most children will have greater power to avoid or throw off illnesses and a greater chance of enjoying sound health.

We cannot teach the value and purpose of these everyday amenities unless we have knowledge, faith and enthusiasm. To teach with real conviction the need for keeping the nose clear, we must have a *knowledge* of the biological reasons far beyond that which we would expound to the children; similarly we must really *believe* that a clear nose is necessary for the fresh air to pass into the lungs; and lastly *enthusiasm* must give us nothing less than a burning desire to see the children around us developing into healthy young beings unhampered by ailments which are avoidable.

Classroom Examples

It might be useful here to give some concrete examples as to how this teaching can be carried out in the school. We will take the case of a classroom of forty to fifty children. The teacher notices that many of the children sniff and cough and do not use their handkerchiefs, and on further investigation she finds that the majority of the children have no handkerchiefs. To remedy this a corner might be reserved by the Nature Table for health posters and picture books. She puts up a poster in her classroom, a picture of a clown, and the class is told that each child, if he remembers to bring his handkerchief, is allowed to put a coloured square on the clown, so that eventually the clown is dressed in a gay coloured check costume, this visual aid provides an incentive for Tommy to remember his handkerchief. Most of us can execute a rough sketch for a poster (*see* Fig. 2); it must be suitable for the age of the child with little or no lettering, yet it must offer some educational purpose. Tommy, taking part in this new game, is incidentally learning colour matching and finger manipulation; it requires skill for small hands and fingers to fit in the square tidily. It is suggested that in the first place the picture should be referred to only as the children remark on it; a child is sure to go up and look at it and a few others may cluster round. This is the moment for incidental teaching. The teacher joins the little group and briefly explains the

poster, ending with such a remark as, "Now try and get your Mummy to remind you to bring a handkerchief to-morrow." It is very necessary to allude to the home, and in the presence of the child we should take it for granted that we have the co-operation of the home. It is important that Tommy should feel that this is something intimate, something personal and has a close link with his home life.

Nevertheless this first step does not guarantee that the children will use their handkerchiefs, it is still the teachers task to teach them this.

It is not suggested that handkerchief drill should be practised *en masse*. Such a procedure lacks the personal touch, and it may seem almost degrading that such intimate and personal activities should be so performed. Why, indeed, should fifty noses be blown at one fell swoop? Such a method only makes the children more dependent on others, which is contrary to our objective of teaching the child to look after himself. A quiet and friendly word in Tommy's ear to ask him not to sniff, or a word of praise to him when he one day remembers to use his handkerchief, goes far to establishing the desirable habit and strengthening the bond between child and teacher. This method may be slow, but it is educationally sound to allow correct attitudes to spread, and seemingly trivial habits of behaviour to be caught rather than taught.

Milk and Meal Times

The daily routine of mid-morning milk drinking affords an excellent opportunity to inculcate further desirable habits. For the youngest class in the Infant School, a special time is generally set aside for the mid-morning milk; tables are laid and the children sit down to drink their milk, and attention is paid to their behaviour. But when they pass on to the next class this milk time merges into play time, and the children are often told to hurry over their milk and go out to play. Surely it would be worth while to give five minutes first to milk time in which one could stress the importance of taking the milk without spilling, of taking care to avoid milk drips on the desk, and of drinking carefully without dawdling.

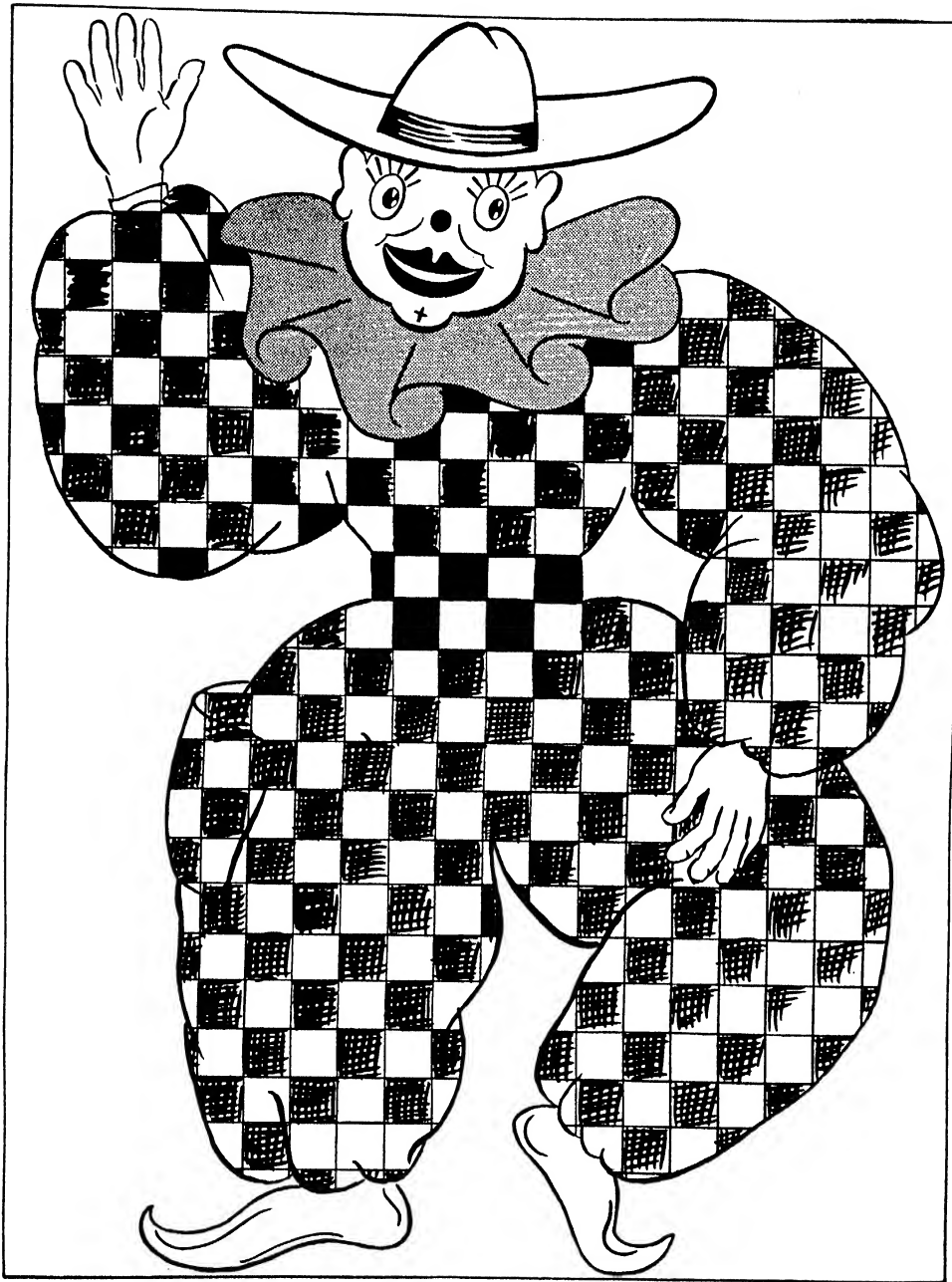


FIG. 2

A Simple Poster as an Incentive in Health Education

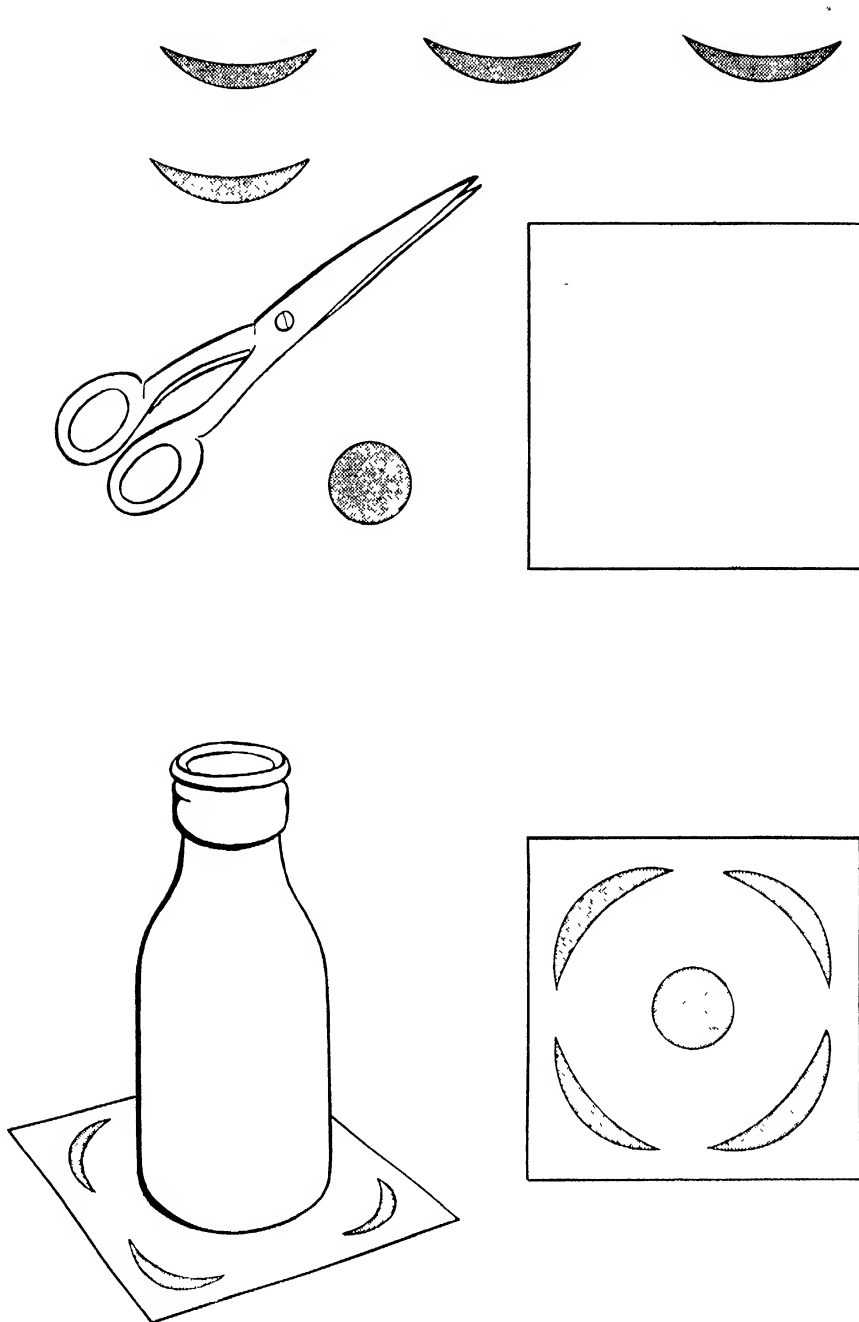


FIG. 3
Simple Mats help to protect Furniture

An incentive to such good behaviour would be for each child to make a mat for the milk bottle in his handwork lesson, he is proud of the achievement and uses the mat carefully. A pride of possession is an important quality to foster in young children; he begins in these small things to value his own possessions and to take care of them, and ultimately to develop a consideration for other people's possessions and public property. Perhaps we can trace some responsibility for some of the attitudes shown by the ruthless destruction of private property perpetrated in this country during the war years to the lack of training in the school, it seems incongruous not to allow the children even to possess their own pencils and paper and other school implements because it is argued that they will not take care of them, but surely they never will unless they are given an opportunity to learn to look after their own property. This mat, then, could be made in the handwork lesson, and may be a very simple affair such as is shown in the picture (Fig. 3).

School meals also afford opportunities for incidental teaching. Fads and fancies generally originate in the home, they are due perhaps to some remark made by the grown-ups in the child's presence, and when he starts school his mother tells the teacher that for example he never drinks milk and will not eat vegetables. Many a teacher can tell the story of some of these children who, after a few weeks in the School, quite happily drink their milk and eat vegetables. Nevertheless, neither nagging nor over-persuasion will attain this end. An attractive table, well served and well cooked food, a happy contented mind, will go far to help Tommy's digestive system: the gastric juices are important for the digesting and assimilation of food, and if they do not flow, the result may well be seen in a miserable child with a plate of half cold stew in front of him. It is not that he *won't* eat it, but that he *cannot* eat it, and this is a subtle difference far beyond the powers of the six-year-old to explain. But there is another side of the picture: in small schools where children of all ages eat together, it is often found that the small boys will emulate the bigger ones. When all are offered a second helping, the older boys accept, and the younger ones will do

the same, but their capacities are so different and Tommy who is six cannot possibly cope with the same amount of food as the big boy of fourteen years; he struggles through half the helping and can eat no more and so lays himself open to reprimand. The supervision of school meals is an integral part of Health Education, a task to be performed by sympathetic people with a knowledge of psychology, a knowledge of the bodily functions, and above all a knowledge of Tommy, and who else is more fitted to do this than his own teacher?

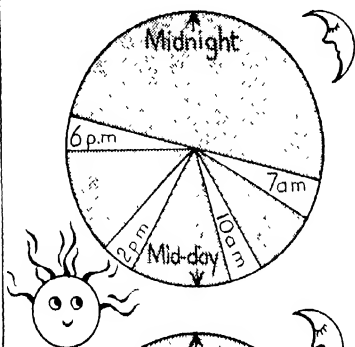
Polite society recognizes certain ways of holding knife, fork and spoon, these may be mere conventions, and yet if we were to look into this matter closer, we should find holding the knife and fork handles in the palm of the hand rather than making a fist round the implements, requires finer muscle manipulation in finger and wrist, resulting in economy of movement. Such conventions have their use, both from the view of developing the co-ordination of smaller muscles and from that of developing the aesthetic sense. We want our children to be able to distinguish between graceful and awkward movements and must help them to acquire the former.

Sleep

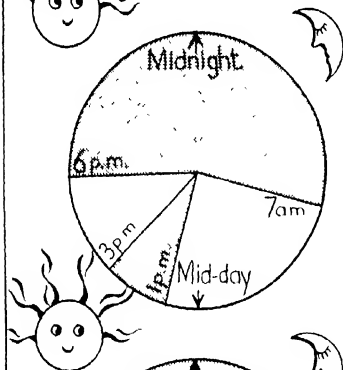
I have never met a healthy child who likes to go to bed. Yet the teacher should try to help the home with this problem, and it should be tackled in school life. Tommy of six or seven years rebels against bedtime, especially in the light evenings; he has to leave his older brothers at play. A poster of bedtime clocks shows him how much sleep his little baby brother needs, how he himself is long past that stage. The white patches are the waking hours, the black the sleeping hours, and he himself has reached the stage when the white is larger than the black. This poster shows an advance on the former ones; it offers the child opportunity to use his ability to read and also to use his reasoning powers in puzzling out the meaning of the different clocks. It cannot be denied, however, that this is a home problem and outside the jurisdiction of the teacher, though many a mother seeks the co-operation of the school.

SLEEP

**BABY
NEEDS 20 HOURS**



**SMALL BROTHER
NEEDS 15 HOURS**



**I NEED
11 HOURS**

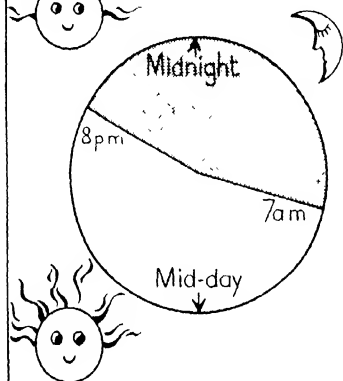


FIG. 4 (a)

An Advance on the Earlier Simple Poster

SLEEP

BIG BROTHER
NEEDS 10 HOURS



FATHER
NEEDS 8 HOURS



WE NEED
SLEEP TO —

1. GROW STRONG
2. KEEP WELL
3. ENJOY OUR WORK
AND OUR PLAY

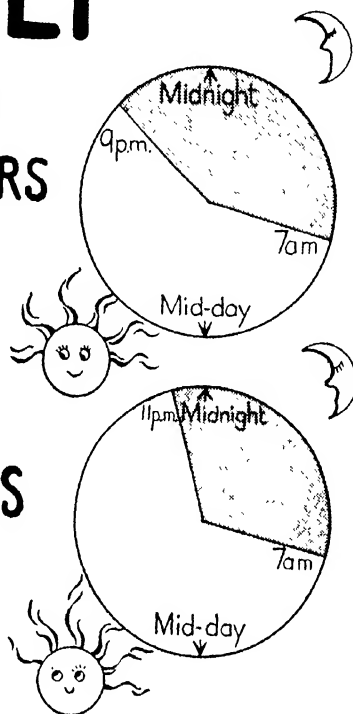


FIG. 4 (b)

Children use their Newly Acquired Reading Skill to Understand the Message of the Poster

A sense of security goes far to allaying the dislike of bedtime; night terrors are largely responsible for the disinclination for going to bed. Let the child have a picture book, his favourite toy, and let him be secure in the knowledge that his mother is close by. Sometimes it may help at home if the teacher gives the children small cards on which they record the time they go to bed (the five- and six-year-olds could do this). This would give an incentive, which if not very wisely handled might lead to a lot of fabrication. Incentives must not lead to competition.

Clothing

We often have trouble in persuading the child to take off some of his top layers of clothing for the physical exercises and games; we are told his mother will not allow it. In this case the school and the home have two conflicting opinions. But it is vitally necessary not to let Tommy think what he is told at home is nonsense. His mother does not know that Tommy will be kept moving when he is outdoors, that he will join in activities that will be hampered by a scarf, a cap, or an overcoat, to say nothing of heavy boots. So it seems that the first line of attack is to give the children suitable activities and games filled with interest and enjoyment and to follow this up with personal example by showing how much easier it is to run about, to jump, and to catch balls, wearing soft shoes (some authorities provide these now) and unrestricting clothes. If the teacher succeeds, the children will begin to *want* to wear less clothes, and gradually they will feel the discomfort of layers of coats, pullovers and waistcoats with which so many children are burdened. The poster (Fig. 5) will stress this point, and older children in the Infant School might join "The Stripling Club." This poster should fulfil a function similar to that of a banner or flag. The school artist (and there is sure to be one amongst the staff) might be approached to make a picture for the Stripling Club. The children honour it and recognize it as a work of art. Even with the six-year-olds, it is advisable to give some indication as to why exercise, fresh air and sunlight are good things to have, they must not

grow up to think that these are merely conventions to be observed because the teacher says so. Let them gradually become familiar with the circulation of the blood as a network of swift flowing canals and streams which cannot work well if they become sluggish; let them be told that the sun's rays can penetrate the skin. At this early age it is beneficial to give the children a right point of view regarding their bodies, and of the functions of the body. This must be done with the utmost tact on the part of the teacher, remembering that to regard the human body and its functions as a taboo subject has been for centuries the traditional attitude.

Attitude to Cleanliness

The practical application of cleanliness must be emphasized in the Infant School. This is more than merely having clean hands; in fact, hands should be such busy tools that one cannot always expect them to be clean. There are two golden rules; wash hands after visiting the lavatory and before meals. Yet there are almost insuperable obstacles to the carrying out of these rules. There are still schools where the lavatories are at least a hundred yards away from the wash basins, and where there is an inadequate supply of soap and towels.

In such schools it is almost too much to expect that the children can be trained in this good habit. It would be foolish here to pretend that with forty to fifty children in the classroom, they could run to the lavatory and then to the basin room at any time of the day during lessons. Schools have different rules for lavatory times: in some cases all the children go at set times during the day regardless of the fact that there are not enough compartments for each child. On wet days and cold days, and in warm weather too, Tommy puts on his scarf, cap and overcoat, thus causing more palaver and delay before and after his visits to the lavatory. The problem would be largely solved by smaller classes, and modern sanitary arrangements in the main school building. But irrespective of the amenities available unobtrusive supervision and incidental teaching of the child is of paramount importance. Its personal and intimate nature



FIG. 5
Sensible Clothing for Active Children

must be recognized. It is a time to be used by the teacher for her incidental teaching so that the children know that they should find and must leave the places clean. She should report if there is not any lavatory paper, and if as sometimes happens she is told the children cannot have paper because they waste it, she should see that paper is provided and establish the correct attitude in the classroom in the use of it. It needs endless patience for these arduous tasks, but if the Infant Teacher aspires to be an educationist, she cannot leave these problems unsolved. In the poorest of one of the country schools I have seen one tin basin, one or two towels and an old dis-used watering can established in the classroom for hand washing before dinner, and the teacher herself took the towels home every evening to wash them, till later some mothers offered to wash them for her: that was Health Education, and showed co-operation with the home.

When children are six to seven years old they begin to like to play in groups. "Join The Brush Brigade." The title has a pleasing sound of alliteration, many children love the sound of words. Put a notice up in the classroom (see Fig. 6), and it will be found that the children quickly take up the idea. Each week the brigade to which any child may belong, pays special attention to one particular brush, say the hair brush, each member tries to remember to use his hair brush and to keep it clean, and to have tidy hair when he comes to school in the mornings and afternoons, a good member learns to do these things for himself and so helps his mother at home. Three good reasons could be given for brushing the hair; first, the dust and scurf from the hair must be brushed off the head every day, hands get dusty, clothes get dusty and so hair gets dusty too: next a good stiff brush nourishes the scalp (this is perhaps a new word for the children) and improves the circulation, and lastly, a hundred strokes a day makes the hair shiny, glossy and well cared for. The next week another brush is set up, perhaps the clothes brush, and the members of the brigade make suitable rules for that week such as brushing coats, shorts, or dresses, or taking trouble to hang the top clothes up tidily in the cloakroom or changing

room before going out to games, etc. Similarly yet another kind of brush could be selected for the third week. It must not be supposed that one week's concentrated attention on one small activity is going to have a lasting effect, yet the child notices the importance which the teacher lays on these personal matters: such experiences, though showing little immediate result, at least lie dormant in the child's mind and are never obliterated. The "Brush Brigade" may have a short run of three weeks, and a wise teacher will then pass on to some other topic. A subject should not be continued till the children have lost interest. The observant teacher can always refer to some desirable form of personal hygiene long after she has concentrated on that topic, reminding the child of a particular poster they had in their health corner, perhaps a term or two ago.

Both cleanliness and tidiness of the classroom are very important. Children can learn much from the teacher's attitude towards the necessary cleanliness of their play material. Every teacher should realize the dangers of infectious diseases and through what channels infection is carried. It is a problem to keep dolls' clothes and soft toys clean. Dettol or some other disinfectant should be used every day to keep the sandpit sweet. Through such activities, in which they can take part, the children see how cleanliness is emphasized. In some cases what is done at school is carried to the home and gradually in this way health education is spread to the family.

In the above suggestions of classroom examples considerable use has been made of pictures and home-made posters. There is, nevertheless, a tendency to overdo the use of illustrations. We do not think the teacher should be burdened with the task of making innumerable posters, nor do we think one poster should remain on the walls till it becomes dirty and dusty, and ignored by all.

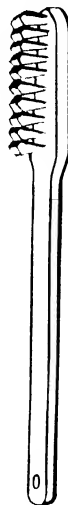
The ideal poster for Health Education, is one which is a joint effort of teacher and children; a poster which changes, develops and is completed under the children's eyes within a fortnight or three weeks. The "clown" and "brush" posters are in this category; the children have helped to complete them, and they have then

THE BRUSH BRIGADE

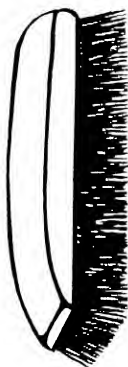
1st
week



2nd
week



3rd week



4th
week



FIG. 6

Poster for Children who have reached the "Group" Phase

served their purpose and should be put away to be used again at a later date if required.

Those Teeth

The stock topic with which the young teacher is invariably asked to deal is that of "care of the teeth." All the way up the school through every age group this topic is, so-to-speak, a "hardy annual." Yet there is little evidence of good hygienic habits and well kept teeth even in the young adolescent about to leave school. The main reason for this is not far to seek, we are far too prone to pronounce hard and fast rules with regard to teeth cleaning, with little thought to the means in the child's power to carry out our instructions. Numbers of families do not possess tooth brushes, others share one brush for the whole family, and if a child does possess his own tooth brush, he has to make do with it for months and years regardless of its condition. The writer knows of a family where a rack of five toothbrushes were kept in the bathroom, one for each member of the family, these brushes were always bone dry at any time of the day or night whenever they were investigated. The family consisted of young people over school age and all of them had had a secondary grammar school education. If the health teaching in the schools is to serve any useful purpose, then first and foremost the teacher must know the home conditions before she begins to advocate teeth brushing. An enthusiastic teacher said to her class of five-year-olds one day, "I want you to clean your teeth every morning before you come to school." The next day she asked them if they had remembered to do so, whereupon one little girl said she couldn't clean her teeth, and on being asked, why? she replied, "Because they won't come out." The child presumably had never seen anybody brush their teeth, other than dentures.

We have been told that bits of food left between our teeth decompose, and the acids then formed eat into the enamel of the teeth. This particularly happens at night time when the body is at rest and the tongue is inactive; so the custom of brushing the teeth last thing at night and indeed at other times too is firmly established in many of us, and some enthusiasts

go so far as to advocate brushing the teeth after every meal. There are others who are not favourable to much teeth brushing, for, they say, only very good sound teeth will stand up to frequent hard brushing. First and foremost a good set of teeth unspoilt by decay depends not so much on brushing as on the quality of the enamel, cement and dentine for which the individual requires suitable food, sunshine, and a good circulation in the gums. Indirectly one might say, mannerly and careful mid-morning milk drinking, plenty of exercise in the fresh air and sun, are steps towards care of the teeth.

The writer was brought up in the older school, but in the light of recent research regarding the care of teeth, has modified her views. Many of us who have established habits of teeth cleaning would feel a definite discomfort if we relaxed or changed our daily routine. The new school is not suggesting a neglect of mouth hygiene. It recognizes that gargling with a mouth wash of salt and water would go far towards maintaining cleanliness and freshness in the mouth. Bearing all this in mind, what should the children be taught in the school?

Moderate teeth brushing will certainly do no harm provided the child has his own brush and provided it is properly kept in a reasonable condition and renewed when necessary. If the teacher holds the view that the children should learn to clean their teeth, then they should be shown the procedure in the classroom, asking one child to bring his own toothbrush to school and by clear instruction to the class, show him how to use it, finishing up with a gargle of salt and water. If this demonstration had been done in the little girl's class, how far less confused she would have been, and assuredly she would have gone home and told them all about the demonstration. Care of the teeth also includes teaching the children a right attitude towards visiting the dentist. Tradition and stories of the crude dentistry of the past have, with a natural fear of pain, implanted a horror of the dentist, and only careful teaching will slowly dispel this, there are still many mothers who will not allow their children to go to the clinic, or are easily persuaded by the children themselves not to make them undergo dental treatment. Far more co-operation between dentists and teachers

together with tactful persuasion will do much to expel this deplorable attitude towards the school dentist. The infant school is the place to lay the foundation of a new outlook, and then later on it is to be hoped that children in their teens will no longer fear having their teeth looked after.

Health Experience

Children store up definite experiences and react to them, they will not become paragons, and many a teacher may become disheartened. Sometimes it seems almost impossible to carry out this method of individual teaching in a classroom of forty to fifty children, but if it is used quite amazing results can be achieved. There are many irrefutable reasons for reducing the numbers in the classes, not the least being that of being able efficiently to teach children how to

live healthily. Meanwhile much can be achieved under the present conditions, the work in the Infant School forms a solid foundation for the biological and social aspects stressed in the later years of school life. The teaching should be positive, and no reference should be made to the ill effects of bad habits.

It serves little purpose to inculcate so-called good habits into the child regardless of the child's home environment. We must understand the limitations of a two-roomed house or tenement with inadequate sanitary facilities. Let every teacher take for granted that she has the wholehearted co-operation of the parents, and hearing the parents' point of view is not the least of the forms of experience invaluable for the broadminded and sympathetic teacher.

Our ultimate aim is to make the nation more fastidious without being faddists, a bit more particular, without becoming prudes.

THE HEALTHY SCHOOL LIFE

Thanks are due to the Leeds Education Committee for permission to publish this contribution and these photographs, and to the Scholastic Souvenir Company, Blackpool, for supplying some of the prints.

WE might take as our guide the quotation from the Book of Proverbs—

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

Environment plays an especially important part in the development of the young child, who is absorbing the experiences of life not from books but from his actual surroundings. The school staff are a more important part of the child's environment than the actual physical conditions. It must never be forgotten that there are many happy and successful schools where the physical conditions are adverse, but that no school is healthy, however perfectly equipped, where the emotional atmosphere does not provide stability, security, and the right type of affectionate interest.

The world of medicine is becoming increasingly conscious that mental health may be more important than physical health, and that more people are ill because they are unhappy than are unhappy because they are ill.

The Building

The perfectly planned and situated school is rare, and most teachers have to adapt existing conditions so that they may be as suitable as is possible. While we could wish for more new schools than there are at present, if the "national cake" would allow of it, it is a good thing to stagger the building of new schools. Ideas are constantly developing and changing in the light of experience, and new materials and methods become available with the rapid scientific developments of the time.

The Ministry of Education lays down definite "Standards for School Premises" which prescribe certain minimum standards of spacing, heating, lighting, ventilation, playground accommodation, lavatory and washing accommodation, cloakroom facilities and so on. These must be

adhered to as a minimum or improved upon to quality for financial aid when a new school is built. When a major alteration to a school is undertaken the Ministry urge that the school be brought as nearly to the minimum standards for new schools as the size of the building will allow. The latest revision of standards came before Parliament in October, 1951, and operates from that date.

1. *Ventilation.* While breathing, everyone takes in oxygen from the air and gives back to it carbon dioxide. Unless the room is ventilated the oxygen content will be gradually reduced, and in extreme conditions, such as those found in a damaged submarine, death would eventually occur through lack of oxygen.

Cross ventilation is important and is secured by having windows on both sides of a room, or by windows on one side of the room with clerestory windows on the opposite side above the level of the door. Windows which fold or slide to open are found in modern infants' schools with french windows for easy access to the playground. The hot air of a room naturally rises while fresh air enters nearer the floor. The older sash type of window should be opened at the top as well as at the bottom.

The teacher should make sure that window cords and fittings are in working order, that window poles are available where necessary, and that any new painting has not made the windows stick. Any defects should be reported to the head teacher.

The windows should only be closed completely in foggy weather. In sunny weather they should be opened wide to admit direct sunlight except on the occasions, rare in Britain, when the sunlight proves uncomfortably strong. Vita-glass, which allows valuable parts of the sun's rays to pass through it, is generally considered to be too expensive for present use.

2. *Floors.* Wood blocks are most suitable for

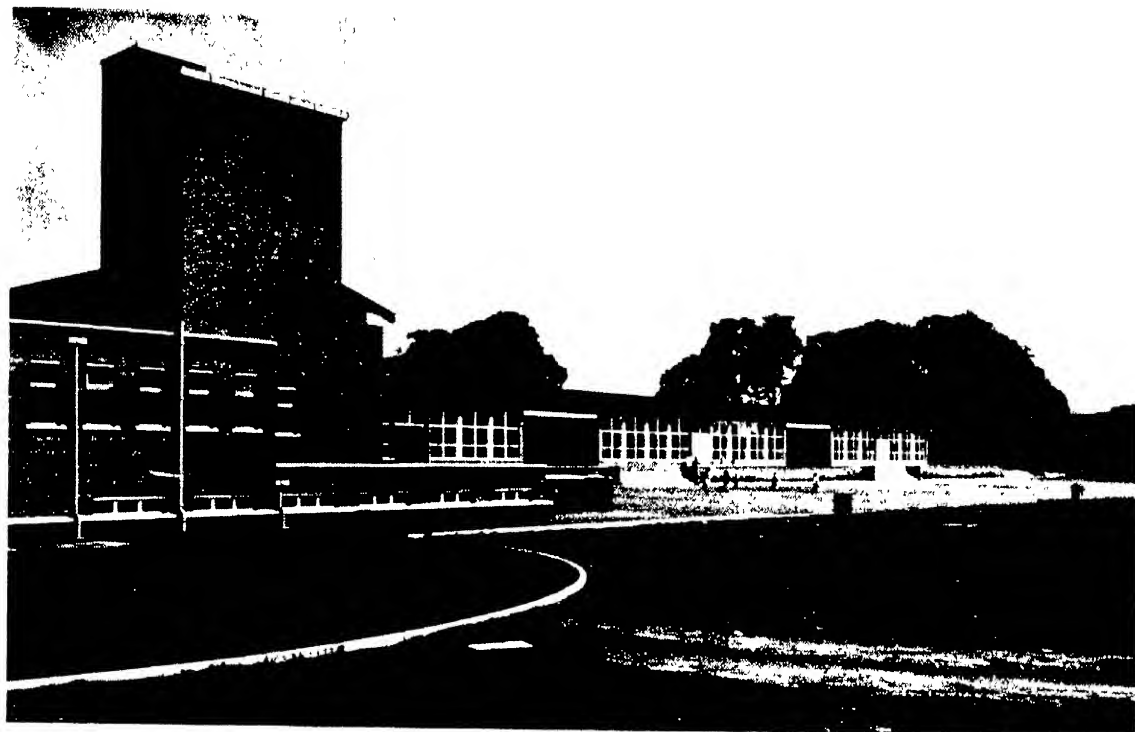


FIG. 1
A Modern Infant School

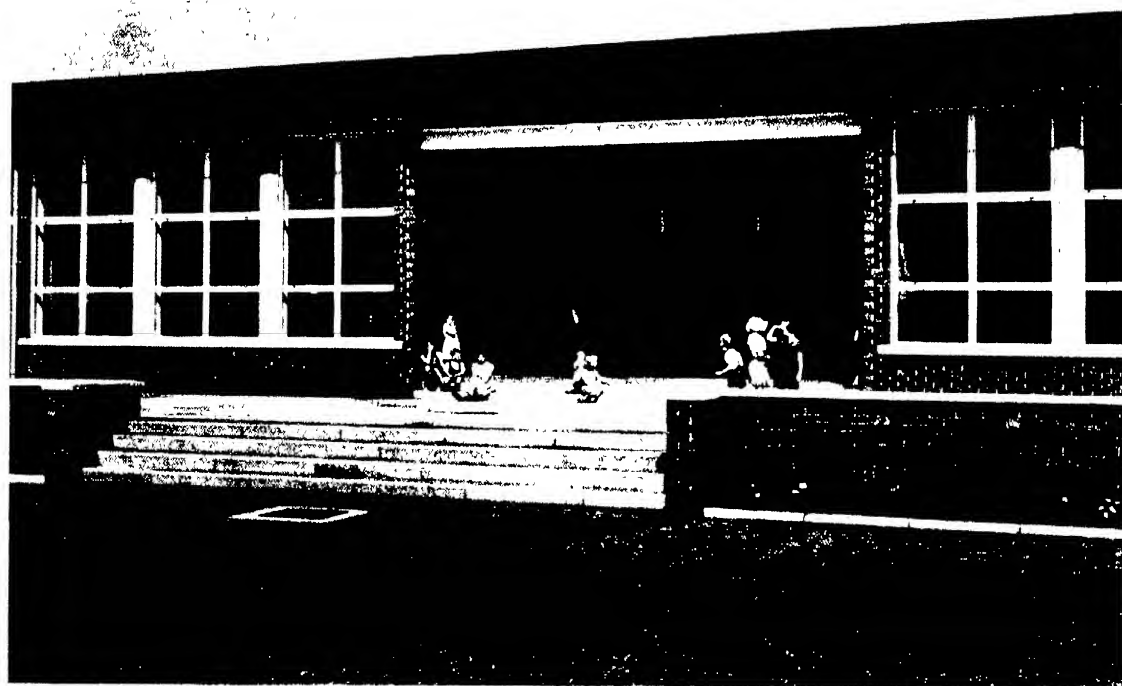


FIG. 2
A Pleasant Approach and Entrance

classroom floors, while rubber composition tiles are ideal for corridors and canteens. Quarry tiles should be used if possible for lavatories, kitchens and larders. Modern buildings have electric points for electric scrubbers and polishers. Scrubbing wooden floors tends to cause splintering and rot, and wooden floors are now treated with a sealing compound to stop the collection and retention of dust and are swept with a sweeping compound at regular intervals. Dust encourages the spread of infection: note how hospitals avoid spreading blanket dust in bed-making by oiling the blankets in each washing process. A special oil which does not soil clothing or limbs can be obtained for floors used for physical training.

Individual mats are advisable for the physical training period where the condition of the floor is not ideal. They allow barefoot exercises to be given without risk from splinters and save clothing from becoming soiled when lying-down exercises are given. These mats should be used when the physical training lesson is given out of doors. Mats are also very useful when small children sit on the floor grouped round the teacher for story telling and finger plays.

3. *Artificial Lighting.* Standards of lighting are laid down by the Ministry; fluorescent lighting is not considered suitable. If the lack of electricity or gas necessitate the use of paraffin lamps, strict safety measures must be observed against fire.

4. *Heating.* Some form of central heating is usual in schools to-day, but it is advisable to have a gas fire or an electric fire in addition for the youngest children. Small children lose heat more quickly owing to their larger body surface in relation to weight. There are many days in Britain, in our so-called summer, when the central heating is not available, yet the temperature may be low enough to warrant the use of an electric fire or a gas fire for the youngest children. Such a fire may be very useful when children are undressed for medical inspection and as a supplement to the central heating in unusually cold weather. The fire must be well guarded or so placed as to avoid any danger of clothing catching fire from it. Gas taps and switches must be out of the reach of small fingers. A thermometer should be kept in the classroom

and placed on an inside wall out of draughts, either hot or cold. The best temperature for a classroom is 60°F, a temperature below 50° is too low for comfort, while a temperature of 70° and above tends to produce headache and lassitude.

5. *Decorating and Furnishing.* Happily, most schools have now shed their dark utilitarian paint and have blossomed forth in gay and pleasing pastel shades. This makes for mental health by its brightness and pleasing effect, and for physical health in that it is usually repainted or re-distempered rather sooner than was its dark predecessor. The colour scheme should, however, bear some relation to practical politics, and in an old type of building a dark skirting board will be less offensive to the eye than a rapidly soiled light one — an inevitable occurrence when floors are cleaned. In new buildings the skirting board area is often of the same material as the flooring with rounded corners to facilitate cleaning. In an industrial district it is quite impractical to paint the outside of the building a delicate shade, as it will be an eyesore in a very short time. It can be gay and pleasing without the colours being too delicate.

Curtains should be reduced to a minimum. When it is necessary to use them, e.g. where sliding cupboard doors cannot be supplied, they should be easily washable. Regular washing should be planned either through official channels or through the goodwill of selected parents.

It is important to have plenty of floor space, and furniture should be easily movable. The most modern school furniture is made of tubular steel, and may be designed to stack if the size of the room will not allow of floor space for the children's many activities in addition to that for the furniture. The children are a little more liable to bump themselves on the stacking furniture owing to its projections. It should be possible to have different sizes of chairs and tables in the same classroom to fit the wide variation in the sizes of children of the same age.

6. *Apparatus.* Ample cupboard space is important. Small apparatus used by each child can be kept in a pretty cotton bag attached to the chair. The bag should be easily washable. If clay pipes are used for blowing soap bubbles,

they should be supplied to each individual. These, along with balloons and toy trumpets should not be used by all and sundry because of the danger of spreading infection by the mouth.

Waterproof pinafores to protect the clothing from splashes should be supplied for water play,

Cement glaze for the walls is washable and cheaper than tiles, quarry tiles are the modern choice for the floor. The staff should make sure that the lavatory chains are long enough for the children to reach (they can be lengthened if necessary). Toilet paper should be available.



FIG. 3

Modern Ventilation Note Clerestory Window

for dolly's wash-day, and perhaps for painting at easels.

7. *The Playground.* The surface of the playground should be hard, level and dry, and large enough to allow of plenty of free activity with balls, hoops, skipping ropes, tricycles, toy perambulators and so on, as well as for certain physical training lessons when the weather will allow. Tarmacadam is softer and less slippery than concrete and is therefore to be preferred.

8. *Cloakrooms and Lavatories.* Lavatories and basins of a suitable size and height are usually supplied. In temporary buildings it is possible to adapt larger lavatories by using a platform to fit round the pedestal and an extra seat of a small size superimposed on the larger one.

Drinking fountains are preferable to individual mugs. All the toilet facilities need daily supervision to make sure that they are clean, dry, and in good order. Training in the proper use of the toilet, with hand-washing after the toilet and before meals, is part of the children's education in healthy living.

Each child should have his own peg on which to hang his clothes, the peg bearing the child's name or some symbol which the younger child learns to recognize as his own. If there are shoe-boxes for changing shoes - a very desirable thing to do - they should be labelled in the same way as should be the child's towel, comb, and rest-bed if these are supplied. Individual towels should be hung sufficiently far apart not to

touch one another, and weekly or more frequent laundering arranged. Steel combs are best for they can be boiled weekly.

In the new schools drying rooms are provided with sufficient space to dry the out-door clothing of about half the school population. A

plication with all its dangers to subsequent health and to life.

General measures against infection include the spacing of the children to the greatest advantage. Each child has his individual bed, blanket, small towel and comb and uses this one and no other.

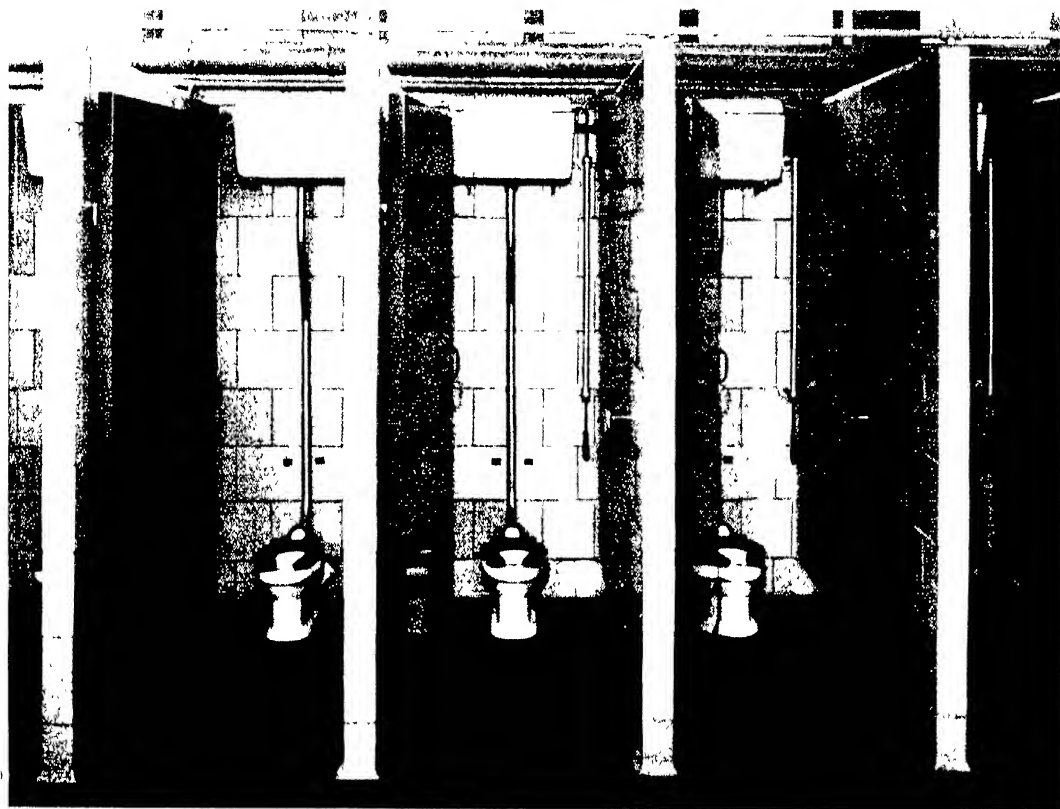


FIG. 4

Modern Toilet Fittings

domestic boiler provides a separate hot-water system for this.

Precautions Against Infection

In combating the spread of infectious diseases five aspects should be borne in mind—

1. *General Preventive Measures used at all Times.* The younger the age group with which the teacher is working the more meticulous must these precautions be. Young children, particularly those under five, are liable to more severe attacks of the infectious diseases, particularly whooping cough and measles, and are more likely to develop broncho-pneumonia as a com-

The spacing of individual towels, the stacking of beds so that blankets are not in contact with one another, the arranging of the beds with heads and feet alternating during the rest period, the keeping of crayons, pencils and the current exercise book in the child's own bag, the avoidance of toys which are put in the mouth, and the washing of hands after using the toilet and before eating are all matters which require constant attention.

One cannot do better at this point than quote Dr. Auden's remarks on infectious diseases and immunity, which appeared in the Supplementary Volume of the *Practical Infant Teacher* published in 1948.

Much has been learnt in the last forty years about the causes of those diseases which can be passed from one person to another and the means of transmission are now much better understood, so that the methods formerly intended to prevent their spread have undergone considerable modification. When infectious diseases hospitals were first established, it was confidently expected that the removal and isolation of a person suffering from such an infection would bring about a very large reduction in the general incidence of such infections.

Experience has shown that this is not the case and we now understand why this is so. What we have to remember is that when we speak of an "infectious disease" we do not really mean a concrete entity, such as "a chair," or "a horse," or so on, but a certain combination of physical signs and symptoms which occurs so often in our experience that we give a name to the mental picture we thus form and argue therefrom that whenever this particular combination occurs, it arises from the same causative agency which we know to be some form of living organism.

Thus when we meet with a combination of a distinctive rash, sore throat and raised temperature arising suddenly, we give to this combination the title "scarlet fever" to distinguish it from certain other combinations and specific signs to which we attach other titles

(toxins) which are produced by their growth. If we have suffered from a previous invasion of this particular organism our tissues are capable of producing an *anti-toxin* which can neutralize the toxins produced and hence a subsequent invasion will not produce the characteristic combination of symptoms.

The Carrier Problem

The micro-organisms may thus gain a footing but cannot produce that reaction which we call disease. But they are quite capable of producing this combination if transferred to a new host who is not so protected. This is the essence of the "carrier problem" and explains the failure of the infectious hospital as a means of preventing the spread of infectious disease. It is clear that even if every case showing the characteristic and specific combination of symptoms were isolated, there would still remain outside and going about in the population many persons who, though showing no signs whatever of "disease," were harbouring the micro-organism in question.

Hence when we speak of an epidemic of, say, scarlet fever or diphtheria, or infantile paralysis we must judge its extent, not by the number of cases of "disease," but by the epidemic prevalence of the individual organism amongst the population at risk.

The Real Nature of the Symptoms

Our knowledge of bacteriology has taken us a step further, for it has shown us that many of these different combinations of signs and symptoms are universally associated with the presence of some individual micro-organism, and are the result of their presence in the body of the sick person. What therefore we call the "disease" is in reality the reaction of the tissues of his body to the results of this invasion.

Toxins and Anti-toxins

But we know, too, that this reaction will vary widely from person to person, for the degree of defence which the body can put up against the invading organisms depends upon the power of his tissues to neutralize the noxious substances

Immunity from Infection

This brings us to another very important result. We know that by getting repeated small infections of the various disease-producing organisms our tissues are gradually educated to provide sufficient anti-toxin to raise our immunity to a very considerable extent. Thus we find that, when there are cases of diphtheria in an institution, the number of the children who can be shown by the so-called Schick test to develop immunity rises

We find also the same result in the children in attendance at urban Elementary Schools. Thus a very high proportion of five-year-olds are "positive" to the test, in other words are susceptible to attack, but among the ten-year-olds a very considerable number have gained an immunity.

This is true also of scarlet fever, and though a simmering outbreak of scarlet fever in a school causes a great deal of anxiety, yet we may extract this amount of comfort from the trouble, that many of the children are acquiring a life-long immunity against scarlet fever by their contact with those who are harbouring the organism

Immunization

But the knowledge thus gained helps us still further, for by inoculation with small doses of the toxin or poison produced by growing the



FIG 5

Immunization

organisms in the laboratory we can produce the same result with certainty and at our own time without waiting for Nature's somewhat haphazard methods. This is now very largely done in the case of diphtheria.

An important part of the preventive work is diphtheria immunization which has reduced the incidence of the once dreaded disease to a rarity and the death rate to vanishing point. This happy state of affairs will not continue unless the schools continue to popularize the scheme. Records should be kept in infant schools of children who are immunized and the parents of those not so protected should be encouraged to accept immunization for them. In some districts doctors visit the schools periodically to immunize unprotected children and to give "refresher" doses to those immunized in infancy. In addition, the child welfare centres provide immunization.

One cannot leave the question of general measures against infection without mentioning the subject of "food poisoning." Attacks of diarrhoea and sickness can be very serious in young children, the younger the child the more serious is the attack. Young children soon collapse from a serious fluid loss, or "dehydration." Faeces may or may not contain the germs causing food poisoning. Soiled knickers or anything soiled by faeces must never be washed in the same sink or wash-basin as crockery, however limited the washing accommodation available. A parcel of soiled clothing sent home is preferable. Thorough washing of crockery with hot water is necessary, and it is not suitable for a child to wash its own crockery. Ideally, crockery should be drained without the use of towels for drying purposes.

Children who have "skin trouble" of any kind should not wash at school unless they use an individual bowl which no one else uses, until permission has been given by the school nurse or the school doctor. This also applies to children with sore eyes who wish to wash their faces.

The cleaning of teeth in school is not generally advisable. When it is undertaken children should not spit into the wash basins where children may wash their faces, but into some other receptacle. Each toothbrush should be soaked weekly in a Dettol solution in its own mug. What one can do with impunity in the small household group one cannot do without risk in a larger group. Most people carry some germs in the nose and throat which may infect others. We develop a certain immunity to the germs of the people we live with, but are not immune to the germs of a larger group. That is why it is not unusual for previously healthy children to have a crop of colds and coughs during their first months at school and then settle down and keep well again.

Daily handkerchief drill is advisable for young children. Handkerchiefs should be kept in pockets or in a washable case with a strap to hang over the shoulders. These are attractive and are enjoyed by small girls; it is most insanitary to pin handkerchiefs to a dress. It is not uncommon to find children of five who have no idea of blowing their noses, and when requested to do so they sniff upwards or blow

through the mouth. Much time and patience may be necessary before the art is learnt. Sometimes a demonstration with a bit of tissue paper or cotton wool, held in the fingers and blown, first by the mouth until it moves, and then by the nose with the mouth closed, will teach the child to blow his nose. Seeing is believing. Nurse will help by demonstrating nose drill at

go out to work and there is no one at home some schools have compiled a list of "accommodation addresses," in other words the mother has supplied the address of a relative or neighbour who is willing to look after the child in an emergency. This has worked well.

Any child who is "feverish," i.e. whose temperature is above 98.4, ought to be at home and



FIG. 6

Spreading the Gospel of Cleanliness

the clinic, the child inhaling and exhaling a solution of bicarbonate of soda, consisting of one teaspoonful of bicarbonate to one pint of water.

2. *The Early Recognition of Infectious Diseases and Their Exclusion from the Group.* The school doctor or the school nurse if either is available should always be consulted whenever a child is suspected of having an infectious disease. In many cases the teacher may notice on greeting the children that all is not well with a child and may save a great deal of infection by quickly separating that child from the group. This survey of the children on their daily arrival at school is most important. The child suspected of having an infectious disease should be sent home, if possible, until a definite diagnosis can be made. Failing this he should be kept away from the other children. Where many mothers

in bed for his own sake and for that of the rest of the school. A clinical thermometer and practice in using it can be a valuable supplement to one's general impressions when nurse's advice is not readily available. Things to look out for are the blister-like spots of chickenpox, the watery eyes and running nose preceding and accompanying the measles rash, the general blush and sore throat of scarlet fever, the swelling in front of the ear and above the jaw line of mumps (not in the neck, please note), and the spasmodic cough preceding the actual whoop of whooping cough. Any child with vomiting and/or diarrhoea should be sent home.

Verrucas occur on the soles of the feet and are usually painful, sometimes causing the child to limp. They should be watched for if any bare-foot work or swimming is undertaken. They

THE PRACTICAL INFANT TEACHER

INCUBATION AND EXCLUSION PERIODS OF THE COMMONER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

It should be understood, when this table is used, that infectious disease is a process, not an entity, and that the process is liable to modification by many circumstances. The period indicated in the second and third columns of this table should, therefore, be regarded as approximate only. Just as infectious diseases behave differently in different individuals so epidemics behave differently in different types of area. The medical officer of health or school medical officer must therefore decide how far the suggestions contained in the table below are applicable to local conditions and what are the best measures of control in his own area. It is, however, the opinion of the Ministries that the Rules governing exclusion of contacts should not be more rigid than those suggested below.

| | Usual Incubation Period (days) | Interval between onset and appearance of rash (days) | Period of Exclusion | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | Patients | Contacts, i.e. the other members of the family or household living together as a family, that is, in one tenement |
| Scarlet Fever | 1-7 | 1-2 | 7 days after discharge from hospital or from home isolation (unless "cold in the head," discharge from the nose or ear, sore throat, or "septic spots" be present) | 7 days after the removal of the patient to hospital or the beginning of his isolation at home |
| Diphtheria | 2-7 | | Until pronounced by a medical practitioner to be free from infection | 7 days after the removal of the patient to hospital, or the beginning of his isolation at home. If there be any suspicious signs the child should be excluded further until pronounced by a medical practitioner to be free from infection |
| Measles | 7-14 | 3-4 | 14 days after the appearance of the rash if the child appears well | Infants who have not had the disease should be excluded for 14 days from the date of appearance of the rash in the last case in the house. Other contacts can attend school. Any contact suffering from a cough, cold, chill or red eyes should be immediately excluded. |
| German Measles | 5-21 | 0-2 | 7 days from the appearance of the rash | None |
| Whooping Cough | 6-18 | | 28 days from the beginning of the characteristic cough | Infants who have not had the disease should be excluded for 21 days from the date of onset of the disease in the last case in the house |
| Mumps | 12-28 | | 14 days from the onset of the disease or 7 days from the subsidence of all swelling | None |
| Chickenpox | 11-21 | 0-2 | 14 days from the date of the appearance of the rash | None |
| Smallpox | 10-21 | 3 | Until the patient is pronounced by a medical practitioner to be free from infection | 21 days unless recently successfully vaccinated when exclusion is unnecessary. |

resemble corns or warts, are spread by a "virus," and are mildly contagious in damp surroundings. Children with verrucas should not go to swimming baths, or do barefoot physical training or dancing in school until the verruca is cured, this may take some time. The use of communal gym shoes is liable to increase the spread of verrucas. Suspected sufferers can be referred to the school doctor or the school nurse who will arrange for treatment. Many authorities have schemes whereby chiropody treatment is available. Severe cases may need more elaborate treatment at the skin department of a hospital. The mother may prefer to arrange treatment through her general practitioner and this arrangement is equally satisfactory.

Ringworm of the scalp and body, and scabies are becoming rarities nowadays. If there is any doubt as to a child's fitness for school, advice will be given by the School Health Service.

3. *Removal of the Source of Infection.* The length of time during which a child may be a danger to others when suffering from an infectious disease cannot be exactly defined. The minimum length of absence from school which is considered safe by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education for the different infections is expressed in a circular and this should be adhered to. It may be, however, that the period should be longer either in the interests of the child or the community. The general practitioner is the best judge of this. A running ear, septic sores and so on may be reasons for lengthening the period of absence from school in the interests of the community as well as those of the child. If the teacher is not satisfied that all is well when the child returns to school, and the child has not brought a medical certificate that he is fit for school, he should be sent home until the school nurse or school doctor can be consulted.

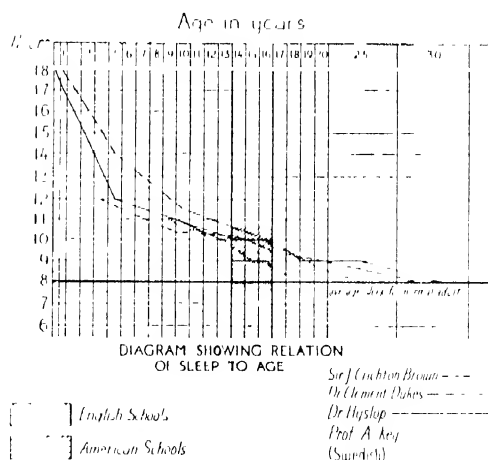
4. *The Control of Contacts.* Here again the Ministries of Health and Education have given advice in their circular. The regulations are less drastic than they used to be, partly on account of the less serious nature of infectious diseases in recent years, and partly because it is increasingly recognized that the children frequently meet out of school hours in any case. The importance of continuity of education

looms larger in view of the above considerations. It is the teacher's duty to refer to the circular, part of which is reproduced opposite, and to follow out its instructions with regard to contacts.

5. *Disinfection.* Infections are spread much more by close personal contacts than by inanimate objects, although these play a certain part. The greatest antidotes to the spread of infection are plenty of space with fresh air and sunlight, general cleanliness and the avoidance of dust and dirt. Chemical disinfectants, e.g. "formalin," are still used, however, after the occurrence of infectious diseases. The floors, desks and walls are well sprayed and the room left with doors and windows shut for several hours. This has a certain value and the irritating smell at least ensures that the room will be well ventilated afterwards.

Rest and Sleep

The following chart shows the optimum amount of sleep required by children and young people according to such eminent authorities as Sir J. Crichton Brown, Dr. Clement Dukes, Dr. Hyslop, and Professor A. Key.



Some infant schools arrange a rest period on stretchers for the youngest group. In many homes in crowded areas the children do not get sufficient sleep at night. Even if the parents realize the value of "early to bed" the streets may be too noisy to allow the children to rest, particularly during the light summer evenings. Such children in particular benefit in health and

general alertness, resist infections better, and gain more weight when a rest period is arranged. Stretcher beds and blankets bearing the child's personal symbol are stored in racks covered by curtains or in cupboards with sliding doors. Arrangements must be made to have the blankets washed at regular intervals. Individual blankets require additional washing after being exposed

Children who do not sleep will lie quietly and relax and, provided new children join the class in small groups, there is no difficulty in getting the custom accepted by newcomers.

In warm weather a quiet shady place out of doors is ideal for a rest period. Such conditions are rarely available and alternative arrangements will have to be improvised.



FIG. 7

Milk-time Arrangement Suitable for Older Children

to infectious disease. Often the mother of the sick child will undertake this. The children should alternate heads and feet in using the beds so that greater distances between heads may minimize infection. The rest is usually taken after the mid-day meal, and if this is eaten in school the rest period may follow on as soon as a visit to the toilet has been paid. If the children go home to lunch the rest is taken at the beginning of the afternoon school period. Shoes are removed and the child is rolled in his blanket. He lies on the bed without a pillow. The teacher occupies herself quietly or sits near a child who is unaccustomed to the new regime.

Milk in Schools

One third of a pint of milk is now supplied free of charge for each child. The milk is delivered in bottles of the appropriate size and fresh drinking straws are provided for each bottle. These straws should be destroyed after use along with the caps covering the milk. The bottles usually arrive in cruet-like crates and the empties must be restacked in the crates for return to the suppliers.

Milk is a valuable food, supplying as it does not only body building material and heat and energy providers but vitamins or protective substances and mineral salts. Vitamins prevent

certain diseases while mineral salts are vital to the chemistry of the body. Of course it is possible to have too much of a good thing, and for this reason one third of a pint has been chosen as a suitable amount of milk to be taken by each child in school. It would not be ideal for a school child to live entirely on milk, and if more than a pint to a pint and a half of milk is taken during the day (including that used in cooking) the child's appetite for solid food tends to become impaired. The amount of milk consumed daily is a point often discussed by the doctor with the over-conscientious over-anxious type of parent whose child has a faddy appetite.

The time at which the child takes the milk varies according to the local conditions, one of which will be the time of its delivery at school. Where no school dinners are provided, or where they are only provided for a few children, milk drinking may be arranged so as to be part of the social training of the youngest age group. Tables are made to look attractive, hands are washed, grace is said, rusks may be given to encourage strong and clean teeth and gums, the children take it in turn to wait on each other and a social occasion results. In districts where the journey to school takes some time, or where there are doubts as to the adequacy of the breakfasts given to the children, it may be possible to start the morning with milk. In any case it should not be given too close to the child's mid-day meal.

Certain children may be selected by the doctor for an additional bottle of milk in the afternoon. The milk order is varied to suit the number of attendances, but where some unexpected absences from school have left a surplus of milk the teacher should give an afternoon bottle of milk to children selected at her discretion. Milk should not be sent home. Children not taking milk should be brought to the notice of the school doctor.

Vitamin Supplements

On the school doctor's recommendation a relatively small number of children will be supplied with vitamin supplements to be taken in school. This usually takes the form of Cod Liver Oil and Malt. The mother's consent is

obtained by the doctor, and jars or tins of malt and oil are supplied by the local authority. These children are seen at regular intervals by the school doctor, probably at the nearest clinic. There their progress is reviewed until the child's health improves and the order is cancelled. The child is usually asked to supply his own spoon the washing of sticky "malt" spoons is apt to be a problem. A monitor to supervise those taking malt and oil works wonders, especially if it is someone with an ambition to become a nurse. A list of children taking these supplements should be kept and an eye kept on the supply to see that it is diminishing at a suitable rate. Vitamin supplements should not be sent home.

Accident Prevention

A great deal can be done in the infant schools to further the work of accident prevention. Precautions will naturally be taken in the school itself to avoid accidents. Burns and scalds have a high mortality rate when children are the victims.

Any coal, gas, or electric fires, also gas boilers must be suitably guarded and the guards so arranged that inquiring fingers cannot remove them. Electric kettles must be placed so as to avoid accidents, and it should be remembered that children visit staff rooms and cloakrooms at times when supervision is not possible. The same care must be taken in respect of kettles boiling on gas cookers or electric cookers or even coal fires. All buildings are not modern and many improvisations have to be made, but safety first and the danger of burns and scalds to young children must never be forgotten.

A few infant schools have steps leading to the playground. If these become dangerous in icy weather replacement by a ramp may be possible and advisable. Alternatively extra handrails will help. Holes in the playground should be reported, and repairs requested before accidents happen.

Any disinfectant should be kept well out of reach.

The greatest peril is on the roads and consequently the greatest contribution the infant

school can make to accident prevention is by teaching "kerb drill" in the school. The toll of road accidents in life and limb is appallingly high, and it is extraordinary with what complacency the nation appears to regard this. One is tempted to think that were the same death roll and damage rate caused by any disease, an outcry would at once arise and everything

traffic. They get to know the children and a very friendly relationship usually exists. In addition to preventing accidents at the time, valuable education in correct road use results from this direction of traffic. Before this and similar arrangements were made intrepid school staff often acted as voluntary traffic wardens without any distinguishing marks or authority.



FIG 8

Safety First

possible would be done to prevent its re-occurrence and to reduce its effects. Safety first on the roads can be taught and learned in many ways. Miniature pedestram crossings, Belisha beacons, traffic lights, are brought into use with a child to act as a policeman on point duty. Tricycles to represent motor traffic, and plenty of "pedestrians" waiting to cross the road all contribute to show how danger may be avoided and are great fun for the children. Many schools near busy main roads have a Traffic Warden or a policeman on point duty who sees the children safely across the road at the times when they are coming to school or leaving it. The Traffic Wardens are employed by the local authority where police cannot be spared and have suitable armlets and hats to identify them to those whose co-operation is sought in holding up the

Most schools near a busy road have traffic signs giving warning to motorists of the vicinity of a school

Physical Education

Physical education plays a very important part in promoting health in the school both physically and mentally. It stimulates the vital processes of the body as well as teaching additional skills, providing adventure and enjoyment for the children, and teaching them to take their place as part of a group. As well as all this, physical education, when rightly understood, should provide ample opportunity for satisfying the creative spirit, latent in every child, which urges him to invent and explore. Incidentally, walking to school provides healthy

exercise whereas travelling in a crowded vehicle exposes the child to an increased risk of cross-infection. Children should walk to school whenever distance and weather conditions allow of it.

As a result of physical exertion the child breathes more deeply and empties his chest more completely, the pulse-rate increases, the abdominal organs are massaged and constipation is avoided, the skin gives off moisture to keep

under the school health service at clinics or hospitals. It is surprising, for example, how selected asthma cases improve when correct breathing is taught.

Nevertheless, the work done at the clinics is often only an amplification of the physical training done in the schools. It concentrates on one aspect necessary for the particular difficulty concerned, whereas the school table of exercises

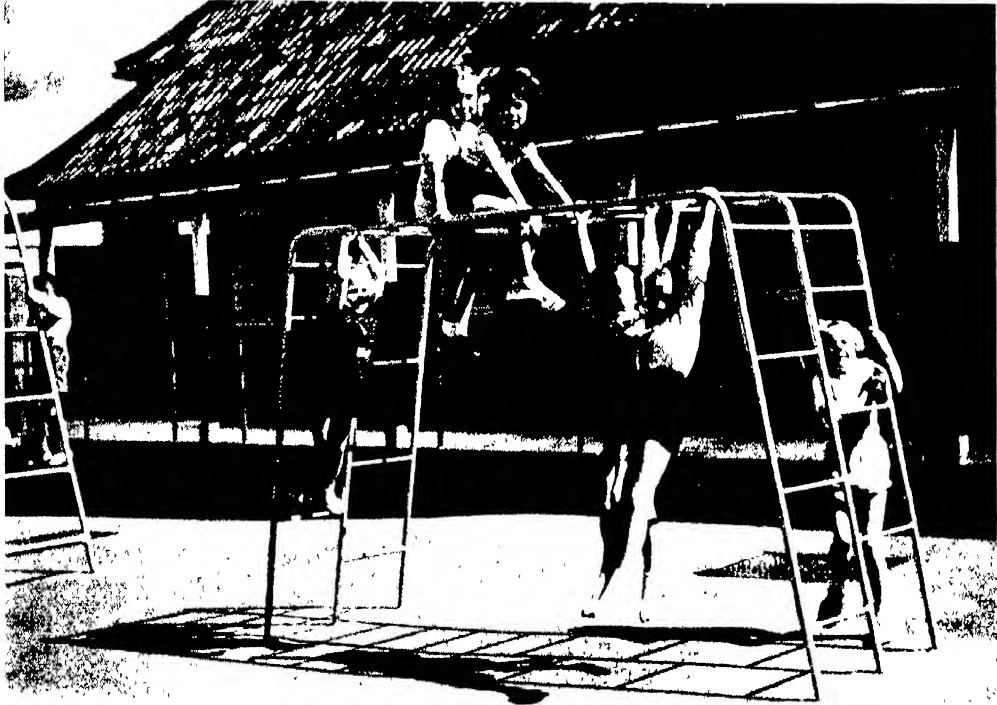


FIG. 9

Suitable Dress and Apparatus

down the body temperature and muscle tone is increased. All these reactions are valuable to health. Lessons should be planned so that they develop a balance between opposing groups of muscles, between flexion and extension, thus producing a healthy posture combined with mobility. Forced flexion of the spine is to be avoided. Correct breathing should be encouraged. Opportunities should be given to practise wide ranges of movement in all joints to gain harmonious movement in the actions of everyday life. Where children need individual attention for some defect, special exercise classes for that particular difficulty are available

should cover the whole field suitable to the age. The advice of the local authority's physical training organizer is invaluable in using the rooms and the apparatus available to the best advantage and in planning a suitable "table" of exercises, if one can use such a formal phrase for infant school work, when a large part of the lesson is usually devoted to free activities.

It is vitally important for health that some garment or garments should be removed for the physical training lesson. This may require some education of the parents. Enthusiasts, fresh from teaching children who are used to being stripped to the waist for the physical training

lesson, would do well to begin by getting the children to remove "wind-jammers," cardigans, pullovers, gym-slips or kilts, and leave it at that for a time. Stripping to the waist is not advisable unless the room is suitably warm. It is rarely considered suitable for the youngest age group who lose heat more quickly. A thermometer should be consulted before the lesson begins. If special physical training clothing is

the lesson that pliable footwear should be worn or that the child should have bare feet.

If a parent or a child requests that the child be excused from physical education, permission should only be given until the school doctor can be consulted or until a certificate is brought from a general practitioner. All children whose medical records show that they are not attending the lesson will be seen at the school medical



FIG. 10

A Study in Relaxation

worn, it must be labelled for each individual child and washed at suitable intervals. The important thing is to remove some of the clothing so that it may be resumed for extra warmth when the active lesson is over and the children are cooling down. In case of difficulty in getting the parents' co-operation an attractive demonstration combined with a short talk by the school doctor will usually win the day. Barefoot physical training is not suitable if the floor is liable to splinter or if there are several cases of verruca amongst the children. If plimsolls are worn they should be individual, not shared by different groups. It is of course essential to

inspection at least once a year, and the latest recommendation given to the head teacher. More frequently the teacher is kept informed by letter following clinic consultations. Where parental anxiety may play a part, an interview between parent, teacher and school doctor will solve many difficulties and misunderstandings. It is often not realized by parents, and sometimes by general practitioners, that it is possible to arrange that part of the physical education lesson may be enjoyed and the child allowed to fall out if he is flagging, or that the apparatus work may be omitted. Modification in this way may solve the problem to the satisfaction of all

concerned. The physical training lesson provides one of the best opportunities for observing any signs of flagging energy in a child. Early signs of subnormal health may be noted by the teacher even before the mother has become aware of them. All such children should be brought up at the school doctor's visit, and the appropriate medical records sent for in advance if not already available. In more urgent cases the mother should be asked to take the child to see the doctor at the school clinic or to go to her own doctor, an appropriate note being sent by the teacher giving her observations.

Records of children who are advised not to take a full part in physical education should be kept by each class teacher, as well as by the head teacher, and should be brought up to date at regular intervals. Such information should be passed on with the child as it moves on from class to class and when the child leaves the infant school the record should follow him to the junior school.

Parent-Teacher Organizations

Reference has already been made to the value of getting the co-operation of the parents in various matters. Individual interviews with parents, valuable as they are where special difficulties arise can only touch the fringe of the field. The parent-teacher organization is a real factor in promoting the mental health of the community. When the family circle is small, people need to belong to some outside group if the family is not to be subjected to unduly concentrated demands on its emotional potentialities. The mother especially may not belong to any

group outside the home and may have little or no outlet or stimulus. The father is usually less in need of an opportunity to mix with an outside group, but he is often more in need of the education in the child's physical and emotional needs that the parent-teacher organization can help to supply. Such organizations are not "one-way traffic" avenues by any means, and much can emerge from discussions and personal contact. The teacher learns of the conditions under which the children live and this may well cause her to wonder whether she could do as well in the circumstances as the parent of whom she may have previously felt rather critical has done. Over a cup of tea the parent suddenly realizes that the teacher is human after all and that both are trying to do the best for the child. Out of such mutual respect and appreciation much good will result for all concerned, not the least being the creation of a united front in dealing with the child.

Young enthusiasts would be wise to enlist for their first meetings speakers experienced with parent groups, so that the right atmosphere can be encouraged. To be a success, the organization must be run as much by parents as by teachers, but guidance is needed at first so that too critical an attitude on either side may be avoided in discussions. Once the right atmosphere is established differences of points of view can be aired with much more likelihood of mutual understanding resulting.

The School Health Service, School Meals and First Aid in the Infant School cover such a wide field in relation to the Healthy School Life that their discussion follows in separate chapters.

THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

THE School Health Service's headquarters is at the Ministry of Education. In some local authorities the School Medical Officer is attached to the Education Department, in others the School Health Service is partly under the direction of the Chief Education Officer and partly under that of the Medical Officer of Health who also acts as School Medical Officer. In some districts the same doctor may work in the infant welfare clinics and in the schools and school clinics, in others the doctor may be solely concerned with the various aspects of the school health services. A few authorities employ a certain number of general practitioners on a sessional basis

Inspections by the School Doctor

Every school child must have a full "routine" examination by the school doctor at least three times during his school life, namely, on entrance to school, during the last year of his attendance at the Primary School, and during the last year of his attendance at the Secondary School. This is so even though there may be difficulties in making suitable staffing arrangements. The infant teacher is concerned with the entrance examination, and this should take place as soon as possible after the child's admission to school, the mother being invited to attend. Thus any new information about the child revealed by the examination becomes available to the teacher at an early date. A record should be kept of the date of the examination in some permanent place, e.g. in the admission register, and this record should be passed on when the child leaves the department or moves to another school, together with any instructions from the doctor about him. Occasionally children may need a short period to adapt themselves emotionally to school life, and the examination may be postponed a little while in order that they may co-operate with the doctor and enjoy their experience rather than the reverse. It is

important to establish confidence, and it is not unusual to find that an apprehensive child loses his fears after watching another child's examination. If no medical information is available about a child who has been transferred from another school, he also should be presented for examination. Any child may be presented for an additional examination at the teacher's discretion.

The same pattern of record card is used throughout the country and this card should follow the child from place to place. Various particulars must be entered by the teacher and the nurse on the record card in preparation for the doctor's visit. Sometimes these visits are spread over the school year, but in smaller schools the main work will be done at one annual visit of several sessions with a follow-up visit in a few weeks' time to see absentees and those children advised to obtain treatment for some defect. In addition to the three "routine" examinations during the child's school life, he is seen in school at least once a year if anything has been noted as requiring treatment or observation. Records should be kept by each class teacher of all children with defects affecting their education, for example, children who should wear glasses, children who should sit near the front on account of poor vision which cannot be corrected satisfactorily by glasses, those who should sit near the front because of impaired hearing, or whose hearing is impaired on one side or the other and should sit with the good ear nearest the teacher. The list should include children whose physical training lesson should be modified in any way and children who have been ordered extra milk or cod liver oil. A note should be made of any child who suffers from fits and is, therefore, not allowed to go swimming or to do climbing exercises and who will cause much less anxiety by any rare fit he may have in school if the possibility is known beforehand. Similarly the rare diabetic child should be noted and the possibility, however remote, that he may

become unconscious or may need to take sugar to ward off unconsciousness.

A more temporary list should also be kept of children who are attending the clinic at regular intervals for remedial exercises, speech therapy, orthoptic treatment for squint and so on. It should include children who cannot blow their noses and children with postural defects who may be given a little additional help in the

function at its best. The class teachers and head teachers are able to help in two ways. Firstly, their personal knowledge of a particular child's appearance and behaviour enables them to report some departure from the normal; such alteration usually indicates the onset of some illness or emotional upset. Reference has been made to this in discussing the spread of infectious diseases. The value of early treatment at the



FIG. 1

The Play Way to a Happy Relationship with the Doctor and Nurse

physical training lesson to correct their defect.

To carry such information in one's head is not easy and in any case is of far less value than a written record which is there for the guidance of other teachers who may take over the class for one reason or another. Such information should be passed on from one class to the next and from one school to another.

Common Physical Defects seen in the Infants' School

The class teacher is the person in intimate daily contact with the child, and it is only through his or her skilled observation and co-operation that the school medical service can

onset of any disease needs no recommendation. the author has known an early tubercular hip first brought to the doctor's notice by a teacher noticing a slight limp in a child who previously walked well.

Secondly the teacher can help by her observation of new children who have not yet had their first routine examination. Children who are suspected of any defect may be seen at the clinics or given priority at the doctor's next visit to the school.

Eyes

The school nurses in most areas have methods of testing visual acuity long before the children

can recognize letters. Cards showing pictures of well-known objects are used, the size diminishing as the cards proceed. Or a letter "E" may be held by the child in one of four possible positions to match the position of the "E" shown on a card in ever-diminishing sizes.

Any child suspected of imperfect vision should be referred to the doctor for advice as should any child who squints, even if the squint is only occasional.

Children suffering from sore eyelids and styes require treatment. "Pink eye" or conjunctivitis is liable to spread and must be treated as infectious until medical advice is obtained.

Ear, Nose and Throat

Many children are mouth-breathers. Nasal hygiene should always be taught before specialist advice is called in. Make sure that the child has a handkerchief and uses it.

Some children have never learnt the art of blowing their noses, but sniff upwards when requested to "blow." To overcome this needs patient teaching, some suggestions for which appear earlier in the book.

Children found to have running ears (*otorrhoea*) should always be referred for medical treatment. They may develop septic sores or conjunctivitis themselves, or spread infection to others, if the discharge is profuse or untreated. In addition, their own ear condition may become worse leading to general ill-health and to a greater degree of deafness. New drugs which combat infection have within recent years vastly improved the outlook for the child with recurrent *otorrhoea*. Children subject to recurrent *otorrhoea* should not go swimming unless the doctor gives permission.

Any child suspected of deafness should be referred for the doctor's opinion. A plug of wax in the ears, adenoids and recurrent *otorrhoea* are among the commoner causes of deafness in a child.

It is easier than might be supposed to test a young child's hearing. If the doctor fails to get a response the mother or the teacher may succeed while the doctor watches the result. If the child is too shy to speak he will usually nod or shake his head to show agreement or otherwise

to a whispered question, or his face will light up with pleasure at some whispered suggestion that pleases him.

Speech

Deafness affects speech; the child who has never heard speech cannot reproduce it until he is taught by special methods. It is not so generally known that some children who reproduce vowel sounds, but have very little power of reproducing the sound of the consonants, are suffering from high-frequency deafness. They may even respond to a whisper and yet not hear the upper frequencies of the speech range. Some of these children may be suspected of poor intelligence rather than poor hearing unless the teacher is aware of the possibility of high-frequency deafness. It is not uncommon for babyish speech to persist into school life, but serious speech defects which do not respond to the training and contacts of school life require an expert opinion.

Stammering is not uncommon in young children. At the infant school stage it should be regarded as a sign of nervous strain, the actual speech difficulty being ignored. A conference between doctor, parent, and teacher may reveal the cause in home or school life. Occasionally the stammer may persist as a habit into junior school life and require speech therapy, which is a job for a specially trained therapist.

Right- and Left-handedness

It is a social disadvantage in adult life to be left-handed. One has only to think of the awkwardness of writing with the left hand from left to right and the difficulty of obtaining left-handed golf clubs to realize this.

Many young children appear uncertain which hand they prefer to use, and a large percentage of these can be persuaded fairly easily to become right-handed in their habits. If the child shows a strong preference for the left hand it is considered harmful to try to force him to use his right hand. If such misguided forcing is used the child is liable to develop signs of emotional strain. Some cases of stammering, for example, have been attributed to this cause.

Many so-called right-handed people use the

left hand for some particular task; for example, someone may write, use tools and so on with the right hand, and yet use the left hand for throwing a ball. In dealing with a child who appears ambidextrous, that is one who seems equally skilled with either hand, it is sufficient to persuade him to use his right hand for the majority of tasks, particularly for that of writing.

This question of "dominance," or which limb one prefers to use, also applies to the foot one generally uses in kicking a ball and the eye one applies to a keyhole or a microscope, but this need not concern the teacher. Her task is to try to persuade the ambidextrous child and the child showing a mild preference for his left hand to become right-handed for most tasks. She must also discover the child with a strong preference for his left hand and allow him to remain left-handed and, what may be more difficult, persuade his parents not to try to change his habits.

The Skin

Children suspected of serious neglect of washing or of infestation by vermin should be referred to the school nurse. Any child suffering from an abnormality of the skin needs medical advice for the teacher's guidance. Some conditions which may look unpleasant are actually non-infectious. These include the general roughness of the skin called *icthyosis*, and infantile eczema, which persists sometimes in the flexures of the skin and is often associated with a history of asthma. The unsightly patchy condition found chiefly on the extensor surfaces of the limbs and known as *psoriasis* is also non-infectious. It rarely occurs in the infant school age group. Nettle-rash or *urticaria* is a common non-infectious nuisance.

Amongst the skin conditions liable to affect others, the rashes of the common infectious diseases have already been referred to. We must consider now impetigo or septic sores. This is a much rarer and milder condition now than in years gone by, when it was quite common to find large areas covered by it with abscess formation in the appropriate glands. It was particularly common over the scalp and face

because of the frequent scratching due to irritation from vermin. All small sores and abrasions should be covered as a preventive measure, the use of ointments is to be avoided.

Scabies is another contagious skin condition which has become comparatively rare in recent years. The parasite inhabits the warm folds of the skin and causes much irritation and scratching. It is rarely spread by clothing or effects, the usual spread being by close personal contact such as when sleeping with an infected person. It is necessary to treat the whole family to avoid recurrences, and this is now a simple matter as one treatment is effective in rendering the condition non-infectious.

Ringworm is another condition once widespread and now rare. It may affect the scalp or the body and can be spread by humans or by animals. Ringworm of the scalp can be detected in the very early stages by a lamp fitted with "Wood's glass." If a case occurs it is usual for the school doctor to examine the whole class in this way. Long absences from school are still necessary if ringworm of the scalp occurs. There may be some degree of baldness immediately after treatment and the child may still be regrowing hair after being returned to school as non-infectious.

Postural and Orthopaedic Defects

Rickets has become a clinical rarity nowadays and its gross, bony deformities are no longer seen in children although, in some cities, its residual effects may still be seen in adults. Postural knock-knee is still seen particularly in heavy children, and is often associated with valgus of the feet. In the valgus position the inner aspects of the ankle are turned towards the ground and the arches of the feet do not function correctly. Postural deformities require medical advice at an early age. Some children who suffer from knock-knee will be advised to wear a corrective splint at night and to have raised adjustments to the inner aspects of the shoe heels in the daytime. Others will be ordered remedial walking exercises with shoe adjustments and yet others may need shoe adjustments only.

Torticollis or wry neck may develop in children

of the infant school age-group. The child begins to hold his head on one side. This may be postural and if so it is curable by remedial exercises. On the other hand it may have a structural cause. If one of the muscles of the neck is damaged at birth the resulting tightness or contracture begins to produce wry neck during the years of school life. This condition

Minor deformities of the toes are usually amenable to home manipulation if the mother is shown what to do. Other deformities of the toes will be referred to the chiropodist for correction by the use of strapping, animal wool, or chiropody felt splints. It is very rare for deformities of the toes to require operative treatment during school life.

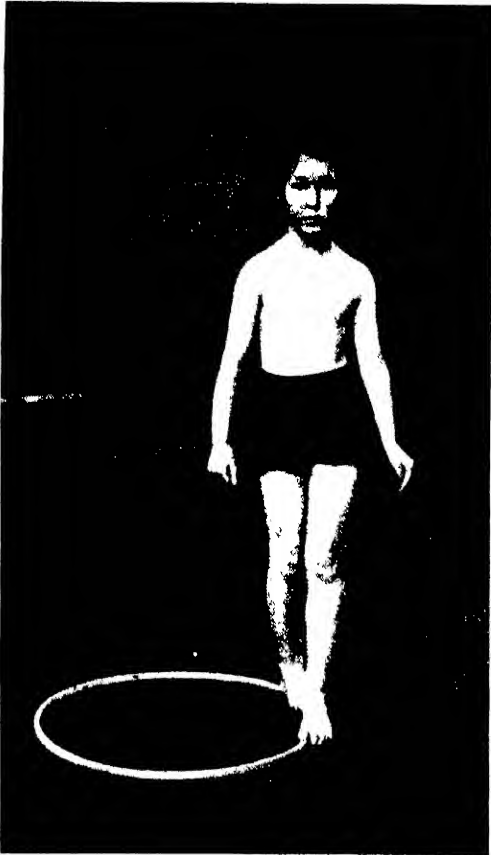


FIG. 2

Footwork and Posture



FIG. 3

Using the Bean Bag

requires surgical correction after which the child should be taught re-educational exercises so that a correct posture is maintained.

Hollow back is a common postural defect in young children. It is usually corrected by the general physical education programme of the school. Some children who suffer from certain chest conditions require breathing exercises in order to develop the greater lung expansion and contraction produced by full movement of the ribs.

The Chest

Children suffering from frequent chest colds should be referred for medical advice if they are not being treated by a general practitioner. Asthma presents its own problems, the general management of the child calls for a conference between doctor, parent and teacher. Asthma is a particular example which usually shows the benefits of such a conference, the parent often needing as much help as the child.

Wetting or Soiling in School

Lack of control of urination (micturition) is much more common than inability to control the bowels. The first possible cause to consider is a lack of home training. Children of poor mentality may be more difficult to train than bright children. If the child does not respond to the regular opportunities to visit the toilet

scalding on passing water. Medical treatment should be sought without delay.

Some children who repeatedly soil themselves may suffer from an abnormality of the large bowel which can be cured, or at any rate improved, by hospital treatment. This possibility of physical abnormality should not be overlooked, but it is a possibility rather than a probability



FIG. 4

Concentrated Effort

provided by the school programme, the incontinence may be one of the symptoms of nervous strain and should be investigated from that angle. Other children become so interested and absorbed in what they are doing that they fail to start for the toilet early enough and have an "accident" on the way. This is particularly easy to understand if the toilet is some distance from the classroom. Sometimes children's clothing smells of urine because they sleep in their underclothes and have wet themselves at home during sleep.

The habitually dry child who suddenly develops frequency and urgency of micturition may be suffering from an infection of the bladder. Such a child will usually complain of pain and

Nervous System

Symptoms of nervous strain may be noticed first by the teacher—jerky movements, an occasional stammer, urgency and frequency of passing water, excitability, liability to emotional outbursts and so on. These again call for a conference of parent, teacher and doctor. Valuable work is done when the parent is able to speak of difficulties in an understanding and sympathetic atmosphere and realizes that her difficulties are not unique. To be told that she can come to the school again, or go to the clinic for further advice gives her comfort and security. This is reflected in her management of the child. When home and school present a united front

nervous strain is reduced to a minimum, and important preventive work in the field of mental health is done. Without such help some of these children would develop more serious behaviour difficulties as evidence of maladjustment.

Team Work in the School

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the doctor's visits should provide an opportunity for a threefold attempt to solve any difficulties. No amount of passing on of information at the end of a session will replace the work that can be done by the doctor, the head teacher, who will often consult the class teacher, and the mother tackling a problem together. Information elicited at such interviews must be regarded as confidential, as must the medical record cards on which the records are kept. It is easy for the teacher to withdraw on those occasions when the doctor thinks it wiser and indicates such a wish.

It is only by getting both the teacher's impressions of a child's symptoms as well as the mother's, along with some family history and some knowledge of family circumstances and temperaments, that the doctor can get the best idea of how to deal with the difficulty. Many medical conditions are influenced by the mind. One has only to think of asthma, infantile eczema, habit spasms, bed-wetting, stammering and so on to illustrate this point. Then the doctor must assess the true meaning of such parental remarks as "the child has trouble with his chest," which may mean anything from the really delicate child suffering from severe asthma or bronchiectasis to the child of an over-anxious parent having two or three colds during the winter. The attendance register is useful for reference as well as the teacher's version of the story.

Often the worries of parents can be tackled most usefully. For example, some family history may be causing unnecessary anxiety, and parents, after speaking of fears and being reassured, may cease to worry. This is very helpful in promoting the mental and physical health of the family concerned. In such cases it gives the parent an additional feeling of security to be told that she can go to the branch clinic without an invitation should any difficulty arise.

More often than not she will not feel the need to consult the doctor further at the clinic, but the knowledge that the opportunity is there should she need it is of value.

It is under these conditions that children not taking part in physical training, not partially undressing for physical training, or not taking milk can most properly be discussed.

The ideal school medical service secures continuity of personnel so that the doctor becomes part of the school with a personal interest in all its concerns. Spacing the doctor's visits over the school year undoubtedly gives the best results as far as the school is concerned, although it may be less convenient administratively.

It is a great asset if the same medical officer serving the school also serves the nearest school clinic.

The School Clinic

Usually a weekly session is held at the clinic by the school doctor, when a parent may bring any school child for advice and where teachers may refer children who cannot wait until the doctor's next visit to school. Such a branch clinic will usually provide daily treatment by the school nurse for the many minor accidents that children incur, as well as treatment ordered by the doctor for certain conditions of the skin, ears and eyes. Children excluded from school by the nurse will be re-examined there as to their fitness for school. In addition the branch clinic may provide speech therapy, physiotherapy, a refraction clinic for defects of vision and a dental clinic. In some districts these may be provided at some central clinic along with certain specialist services provided by visiting consultants in orthopaedics, paediatrics, ear, nose and throat work, ophthalmic work and a child-guidance team. Alternatively these specialists, as well as others, may be available only on hospital premises. The teacher should acquaint herself with the local conditions. Suffice it to say all these facilities are available through the local authority's schemes, that parents are also encouraged to consult their general practitioners, and that it is important to foster a good liaison and exchange of information with general practitioners.

The School Dental Service

A dental service is provided by the local authority's scheme. It varies considerably in scope from place to place, because of the shortage of dentists applying for local authority

Children who do not fall within the local authority's dental scheme, or who refuse treatment by the local authority, are eligible under the Health Service for free treatment from dentists in private practice who have joined the scheme. Such dentists have the right to refuse



FIG. 5

Visiting the School Clinic

posts. The dentist visits the school and inspects the mouths of the children who fall within the scheme, and treatment is provided at the nearest clinic in due course. There is usually an arrangement also for the emergency treatment at the clinic of toothache, gumboils and so on for those children both within and without the scheme. The teacher should acquaint herself again with the local conditions.

to accept certain patients if they prefer to do so and it is possible that some dentists will have decided to limit themselves to adult patients. On the whole, now that the first rush on the Health Service dental scheme has subsided, treatment for children is not difficult to obtain from private practitioners working for the Health Service. The disadvantages of obtaining treatment in this way are the lack of regular



FIG. 6
The Dentist Visits the School

inspections, unless parents are sufficiently keen and methodical to secure them, and the fact that children accept treatment more readily as part of a group in a school scheme than when taken individually by their parents.

A health education campaign in dental hygiene should form part of the ideal dental service. Parents should be taught the value of pre-natal and post-natal vitamins, and that

inspections and general advice, tests visual acuity, weighs and measures the children in preparation for the doctor's visits, and examines various groups when infection breaks out. She may also be engaged in maternity and infant welfare work in the district. Every child is usually examined three times a year for freedom from head and body vermin and for general cleanliness and freedom from skin diseases.



FIG. 7

A Study in Hyperextension of the Spine

breast feeding is ideal, not only for its food value but for the development of healthy jaws and sound teeth. Children need chewing exercise from an early age for the same purpose. The value of rusks, bones, raw carrots and apples for jaw development should be pointed out. A diet too rich in carbohydrates, particularly in sugar, encourages dental decay. The use of the tooth-brush after meals should be encouraged, particularly after the last meal of the day so that no residue of food is left between the teeth overnight.

The School Nurse

The school nurse plays a very important part in promoting health in the school. In addition to her work at the nearest clinic she visits the school at regular intervals for cleanliness

Those who are not free from infestation are either excluded from school until clean, or followed up at monthly intervals and excluded if they do not improve. Suitable advice is sent to the parents by letter. Body vermin are extremely rare nowadays, but it is by no means uncommon to find head lice and even commoner to find traces of infestation in the form of nits, which are the eggs of the head louse. These are shiny white granules firmly attached to the hairs. They may hatch out and start the trouble all over again. The importance of treating the family as a whole is being increasingly realized and schemes for family disinfection have been arranged. The discovery of D.D.T. during the war has been of enormous value in coping with the problem. If D.D.T. powder is used amongst the hair, lice will be killed as they hatch out

and the hair will be "proofed" until it is washed again, when a fresh application of D.D.T. is advisable. Much can be done by the teacher to encourage a neat hair style amongst the children and one hopes that the newest child film star or television idol will wear some arrangement of plaits or short hair and so make her task easy.

Should a teacher suspect that a child's head is verminous she should refrain from examining the child herself and either ask the nurse to visit the school or send the child to the clinic. It is a technical assault to examine a child's head or to undress it for the purposes of examination, unless, like the school nurse or doctor, one is provided with an authority for doing so from the local education committee.

During the course of her inspections the school nurse will find a number of children whom she will refer to the school doctor, after informing the head teacher and securing her co-operation.

Conclusion

Each member of the team has an important part to play, not the least being that of the class teacher who has the closest contact with the child and will often be the first to notice and report some matter of importance to the child's health and well-being.

The class teacher can do a great deal to further health habits by her personal example.

A pleasing appearance not only gives pleasure to the children but sets a certain standard for them to copy, and time is well spent from the educational point of view in producing a well groomed effect. Well kept teeth, well brushed hair suitably arranged, well kept hands and nails, a clean blouse or frock, coats kept well brushed and shoes kept repaired and polished, are all examples which form a valuable part of the child's education.

We sometimes feel discouraged in our task, but when we talk to those who remember the early days of school medical inspection we realize what tremendous improvements have taken place within living memory. When we hear that infestation with vermin, including fleas, was much more severe and much more prevalent, that teachers had to change their clothes on reaching home and keep certain clothes for school wear, that parents of those days claimed that vermin were a sign of health, when we hear that scabies was rife, that whole schools were infested with ringworm, that extensive impetigo was common with abscesses of the appropriate glands, that rickety deformities were a common sight, that children were sewn up for the winter in their underclothing so that parental wrath descended if they were undressed, we realize that we have travelled a long way, and that the school medical services and the teaching staff have assisted considerably on the journey.

SCHOOL MEALS

SCHOOL Meals have become a definite part of the life of the school since the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. Prior to that time meals were provided for necessitous children only. This need varied very considerably even in individual schools. Later, rationing and the full-time employment of women, including mothers, completely altered the position. There is no doubt that the school meals service as we know it to-day has contributed appreciably to the improvement in child health and development recorded since that date. It has been particularly valuable to those children who did not get a cooked meal at home in the middle of the day.

School meals must be considered from three angles, their nutritive value, their social value, and the hygiene of the school meal--school meals must be safe for the children.

Nutritive Value

The mid-day meal is the main meal of the day for children. The Ministry of Education have suggested that this meal should have an energy value of about 1,000 calories and that most of the necessary first-class protein (body-building food) and much of the fat should be contained in it. Twenty to twenty-five grammes of first-class protein (i.e. protein of animal origin) was suggested, and thirty grammes of fat. When the children are under 8 years of age the total energy value was to be reduced by 33 per cent with a corresponding reduction in the amount of first-class protein and fat. In practice this allowance was found to be somewhat on the generous side for most children's appetites, at any rate for those of the younger age group. When the food value of the third of a pint of milk consumed in school is added to the dinner menu usually provided, the original suggestions of the Ministry are equalled.

The chief body-building foods are milk, cheese, eggs, meat, offal, sausage and fish. The warmth and energy producing foods are bread, cake,

pastry, sugar, jam, treacle, flour, biscuits, dried fruit, pulses, dripping, lard, suet, margarine, cheese and bacon. It is essential that animal fats form a due proportion of these ingredients. Now we must consider the equally important protective foods and mineral salts. The protective foods or vitamins prevent certain diseases, of which rickets and scurvy are the outstanding examples; in addition they reduce the liability to septic infections.

The fat-soluble protective foods are found in milk, cheese, eggs, butter, cream and fish. The citrus fruits, tomatoes, and certain vegetables are important sources of the anti-scurvy vitamin C. This vitamin is destroyed by prolonged cooking.

The mineral salts essential to life and growth remain to be considered. The calcium requirement for all the tissues of the body and particularly for bone and teeth formation is about 1.2 grammes per day. Calcium is to be found in milk (including skimmed milk), cheese, watercress and green vegetables. Phosphorus similarly is needed for bones and teeth and is responsible for energizing many of the chemical reactions of the body. If the calcium content of the diet is sufficient, the phosphorus content will be sufficient; this also applies to magnesium. Iron is needed to make the red pigment of the blood. None of our food is very rich in iron and investigation of the haemoglobin (pigment) content of the blood often shows a level lower than the optimum. Foods that contain iron are liver and kidney, green vegetables, peas, oatmeal and rolled oats, brown bread, eggs and cocoa. The small amounts of iodine found in drinking water and vegetables are usually sufficient for our iodine requirements.

The above considerations emphasize that the satisfaction of hunger is not the only criterion of a satisfactory meal. The main meal of the day must also provide a high first-class protein and fat value and must supply an adequate vitamin and mineral salt content. This is the responsibility of school meals organizers.



FIG. 1
A Modern School Kitchen

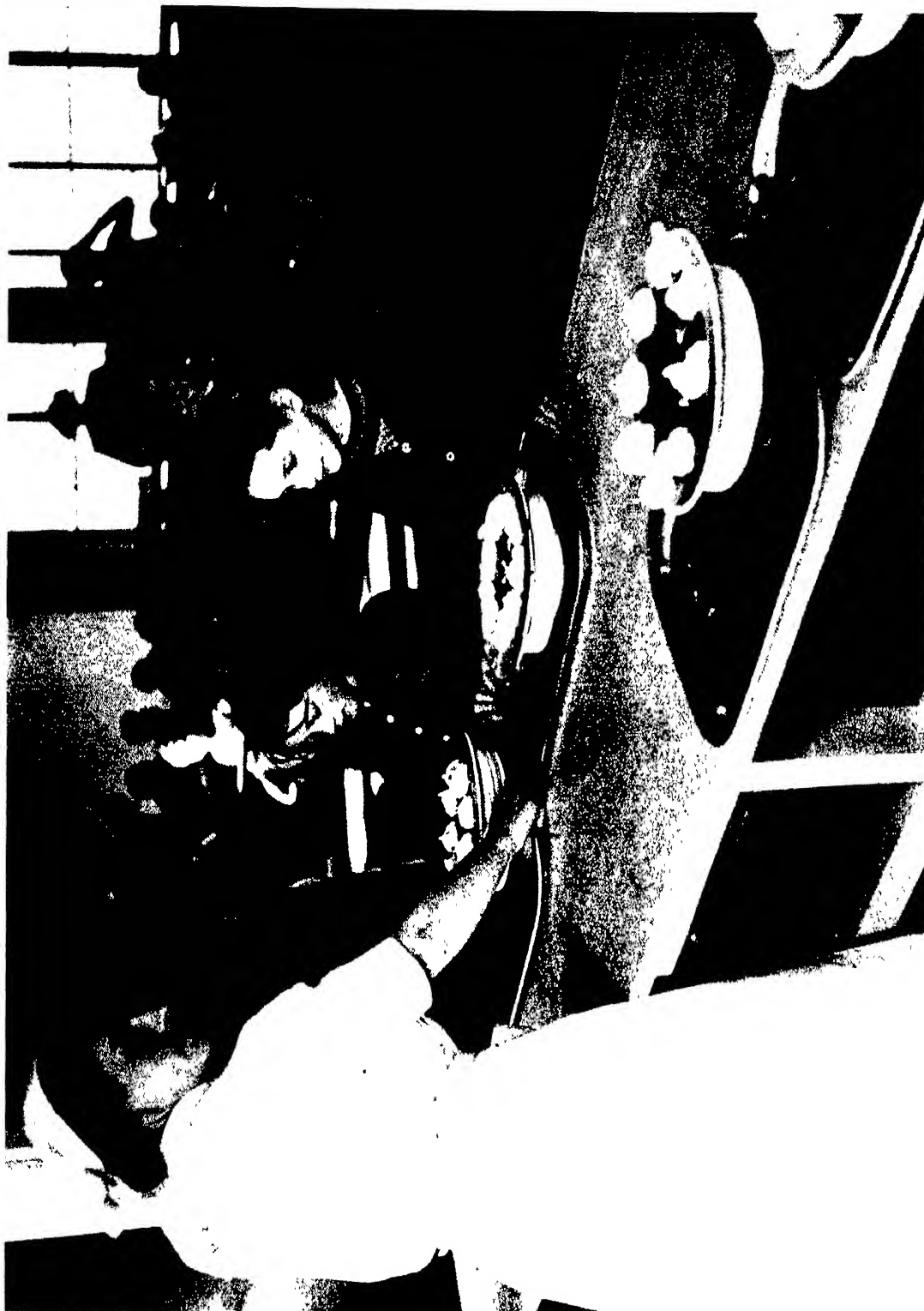


FIG. 2
Serving Meals in the Dining Hall

Social Value

The school meal should educate the child in the social value of a meal and help him to take his place in community life. It should also have an educative value in food habits, tastes and preferences.

Small children become confused and worried by large numbers. In the Infant School the number eating in one room and at one table

profit from the school meal and especially so if good manners and mutual helpfulness are slowly fostered.

Children's taste in food is often educated by the school meal. Example, encouragement, or at times a judicious ignoring of their reactions, encourages children to try dishes new to them and to acquire new tastes. In some instances they carry these new tastes into their own homes and may even educate their parents. An



FIG. 3

Learning to Serve One Another

should be smaller than in the Senior Department. Tables should accommodate four to six. For many children it is an education to sit down to a meal at an appropriately laid table. They learn to use suitable cutlery, to take it in turn to wait on each other and to clear the table, to take small helpings rather than leave food on the plate, and to enjoy conversation during the meal. It is not only the child from a poor home who needs education in this way. Other examples are the only child who is too much the centre of attention at a meal, the delicate child with a faddy appetite, the badly managed child who is allowed to run about whilst he eats; all

increasing number will apply to their own children in later life the dietetic habits they learnt at school.

These social benefits cannot result unless the supervision of the meal is in the hands of the children's own teaching staff, the ideal arrangement being for some teachers to take meals with the children and so unobtrusively to set the tone of the meal. As Mr. le Gros Clark says—

"A school meal is by definition a nourishing meal, but it is far more than that. It is a symptom of our changing attitude towards the process of education; and our changing

attitude is less a shift towards care of the body as opposed to care of the mind than a growing appreciation of the need to train the child into a confident, adaptable, socially mature human being."

Hygiene in the Canteen

Where meals are not cooked on the premises the teachers may be the only trained people in

should always be pasteurized or boiled, and parent-teacher organizations can help to popularize the use of such milk in the home.

2. *By Flies, Mice and Other Livestock.* The importance of dealing with these pests is obvious. At any time when there is a need for action it should be reported to the school meals department.

3. *By Utensils used in the Kitchen and Dining Room.* Helpers should be trained to handle



FIG. 4

"Family" Dinner Service

immediate contact with those who serve the school meal and who wash up afterwards. It is therefore important that the teaching staff understand the principles on which good habits are based and help to enforce the rules of hygiene. They will naturally co-operate with school meals organizers in these matters and with professionally trained cooks and caterers when meals are cooked on the premises.

The four principal ways in which disease may spread in the school canteen are as follows—

1. *By the Food and Drink Itself.* This is the concern of the school meals department, rather than the teacher. Milk supplied to children

cutlery by the handles when laying the table and not to put their fingers inside cups and glasses or on the rims. Plates should be held by the rims. Such habits are not natural to everyone.

Ideally crockery should be washed in a double sink, so that it can be rinsed in very hot water and dried on racks without the aid of tea towels.

If tea towels are used they must be boiled at frequent intervals and must never be used for hand towels by the worker. Separate hand towels should be provided.

4. *By Human Agents.* Infection may spread from one human being to another by breathing

in of germs, by swallowing them, and by direct contact.

When we sneeze or cough we spray droplets from our mouths and noses for a distance of three to six feet. These are heavily infected with any germs we may be carrying in our noses and throats. Such spray may fall directly on to food or the germs may remain in the atmosphere or in the dust after the moisture has evaporated.

only way in which it can be secured is to lay down certain rules for the conduct of the staff, to educate them in the reasons for these rules, and to insist on them being carried out to the letter. Sunshine and fresh air are the most powerful germicidal agents we know and after them comes soap and water. The canteen worker should wear a clean overall covering her entire walking-out dress including her sleeves,



FIG. 5

A Nursery Class at Dinner

Occasional sneezes and coughs should be smothered by a handkerchief and those of the staff suffering from an infectious cold should be off duty.

The germs which we swallow are most commonly those spread from the bladder or the bowel to the mouth by the hands of those preparing or eating food. The eggs of threadworms are also conveyed in this way. The diseases most commonly disseminated in this way are the dysenteries, typhoid, and paratyphoid.

Scabies and impetigo are examples of diseases spread by direct contact.

The prevention of infection is a vitally important part of the school meals service, and the

her forearms should be bare so that they can be washed easily, and her hair should be pinned out of the way and tied up in a clean (and becoming) cotton cap. Her finger nails should be kept short and well-scrubbed. It is most important that adequate cloakroom accommodation is provided, including soap, hot water, nail brushes and individual (not roller) towels. A notice might well be hung on the back of the lavatory door saying, "You are handling a child's food. Wash your hands," so fostering a sense of personal responsibility. The worker should never be allowed, let alone obliged, to wash her hands in the kitchen sink. Any worker suffering from an infection of the nose or throat

or from an attack of diarrhoea should report sick immediately.

Conclusion

About half of the entire school population were taking school meals when rationing ended.

children will require a school mid-day meal. Many factors are at work which influence and determine the numbers to be catered for including the national need for women workers, and the family's inability to live on the father's wage alone. It is still the policy of the Ministry of Education to provide full meals as part of the



FIG. 6

Enjoying Dinner whilst learning to use Grown-up Cutlery

Some children who live near the school premises, and whose mothers do not go out to work, are as well or better catered for at home than at school, and more mothers may wish to provide their children's mid-day meal at home. On the other hand as re-organization progresses, an increasing number of older children are travelling longer distances to school, and more of these

Social Services plan at some unspecified future date, but economy measures have postponed the possibility for an indefinite period. We can be sure, however, that school meals are likely to remain an established part of the life of the school, and that they can only be run safely, efficiently, and happily, if the teacher plays her part in their supervision.

FIRST AID IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

THE amount of first aid work that should be done in the school varies inversely with the distance of the school from the school clinic, and the hours during which treatment is available. The nearer the clinic and the longer the hours it is open, the less first aid is necessary or advisable at the school. Teachers should know the hours during which the clinic is staffed. Even in large centres of population with a clinic near to most schools it may be that the clinic is closed between, for example, 12.30 and 4.0 p.m. on certain days owing to the nursing staff being occupied elsewhere during these hours. It is obviously a waste of valuable time to send an emergency to the clinic at these times. To avoid delay a notice should hang in a permanent place in the school recording the address, telephone number, and hours of attendance at the nearest clinic, how to call an ambulance, and the address and telephone number of the nearest hospital dealing with casualties and the whereabouts of the first aid box.

Head teachers would do well to try to ensure that at least one of their staff has had training in first aid and that this teacher is enabled to attend refresher courses from time to time. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the duty of the person rendering first aid is to fill the gap in the interim between the accident and the arrival of more skilled personnel. The good first aid worker renders invaluable service by stopping bleeding, by supporting an injured part with emergency splints and bandages, by artificial respiration, by treating shock, and generally by knowing what should, and sometimes more important, what should *not* be done in various emergencies. Neither exact diagnosis nor further treatment after the emergency is over is the business of the first aid personnel.

When an accident occurs in school necessitating the sending of the child to the clinic or the hospital, the mother's presence should be secured if possible so that she can accompany

the child. In any case she has a right to be informed as soon as possible. Her consent may be necessary to whatever treatment is required, particularly if the child has to be kept in hospital.

Another very important duty when an accident occurs in school is to record a brief account of events in writing in some book where it will remain available for reference for some time. Serious accidents should be reported to the local authority. One never knows whether the action taken may be queried or misunderstood, or when the simplest accident may lead to complications for example negligence may be suggested as a cause of the accident, or sepsis may occur unexpectedly in a trifling wound, and either may lead to a query as to whether suitable treatment was given. A written account stating briefly how the accident occurred, the teacher's observations on the injury, the first aid treatment given, how the case was disposed of for further treatment, and the advice given to the parent, will safeguard the teacher and the school. It may be thought to be a tiresome routine for many long moons, but the occasion will surely arise when it will be of the greatest use in safeguarding the reputation of the school and of the teacher. Court cases have been avoided or won by just such records. Compared with written records, verbal recollections of the event carry little weight.

The First Aid Box

The first aid box should be of stout wood or tin with a lid which closes firmly to exclude dust, yet one that is not difficult to open or shut. It should *not* be locked. The contents will vary in quantity according to the amount of work likely to be undertaken. A list of contents might well be pasted on the lid of the box, together with a reminder to leave the contents as one finds them and to report when any item needs replacement. It is so easy for the undisciplined worker to leave such duties undone after coping

with an accident, thus making the task of dealing with the next casualty more difficult and often less hygienic. Each type of dressing should be wrapped in clean paper firmly secured by pins or string, or placed in a big envelope, or rolled in a clean towel. A clean hand towel, or a sheet of fresh paper should be available on which to spread clean dressings while cutting them to the required size. The box should be turned out and dusted periodically and the contents checked.

The contents of the first aid box might well be—

- 1 pair of scissors
- A few safety pins
- A pair of splinter forceps
- Triangular bandages large enough to form a sling or to tie emergency splints
- 1 roll of "Elastoplast" 1 in. wide
- 1 tin of prepared "Elastoplast" dressings.
- 1 packet of cotton wool, some of which has been made into swabs and stored in a clean cotton bag
- 1 packet of white lint
- 1 packet of 2 in. cotton bandages
- 1 small portion of white gauze
- 1 or 2 oz. of Bicarbonate of Soda in a clearly labelled tin or jar
- A few boiled sweets in a tin or jar

On no account should any ointments or strong disinfectants be included as these may be detrimental (see notes on *Burns and Scalds*). Fomentations should not be used. Simple cleanliness and dry dressings give the doctor the best opportunity to select the most suitable way of treating the patient subsequently.

If the school is a long way from help and a hot water bottle is included for the treatment of shock it *must* be completely protected by a cover and the cover must be firmly secured.

Types of Injury

One might divide first aid treatment in school according to the degree of seriousness of the injury.

1. *Injuries which Appear Trivial*

(a) Small cuts, abrasions and bruises. In country schools where clinic treatment is not readily available these might be treated in school and advice given to the children to go to their own doctor should the necessity arise.

Wash the hands before handling clean dressings. Clean the injured part with swabs wrung out of boiled water. Start at the edge of the

wound, work outwards and then discard the swab. Apply a dry dressing, consisting of a prepared "Elastoplast" dressing or a piece of lint with the smooth side towards the wound, or a piece of gauze held in place by "Elastoplast."

Bruises usually require only re-assurance of the patient. Where tendons lie between the surface of the skin and underlying bone as they do on the backs of the fingers, they are easily cut by a comparatively trifling wound with a sharp instrument such as a chisel. In such cases it is important to make sure that each section of the finger can move through its full range before deciding that the injury is trifling. Cut tendons can also be missed easily at the wrist, on the palmar aspect of the fingers and hand, and on the feet. Early repair of cut tendons by an expert is vital to full recovery.

The mother of a child suffering from an injury to the head should be told to seek medical advice should the child turn drowsy or vomit, or behave in any unusual way during the next 48 hours. Thousands of children sustain quite severe bruising of the scalp without any further symptoms occurring. Occasionally, however, the skull may be cracked and one of the middle meningeal arteries situated inside the skull may be torn. Although the child does not seem ill immediately after the accident the torn artery bleeds inside the skull leading to a gradual accumulation of blood and resulting after a time in unconsciousness owing to pressure on the vital brain structure. Death will eventually occur if the bleeding is not stopped by surgery. Rare though these cases are their mechanism should be understood and timely warnings given to avoid the occasional case being left dangerously long without treatment.

(b) Foreign bodies in the eye and nose which respond to simple measures. Minute particles of grit in the eye may move if the patient blows his nose, or may be removed by the corner of a clean unused handkerchief. Sometimes pulling the top lid over the bottom lid may do the trick, the lower eye-lashes acting as a brush underneath the top lid. Where no skilled help is available the first aid worker may be able to turn the top lid back over a match stalk and remove the grit with the corner of the clean handkerchief. She would do well to practise on

adults with no grit in the eye to become competent.

If these methods fail nothing more should be attempted. Try to prevent the child from rubbing his eye.

Foreign bodies in the nose may respond to blowing down one nostril with the other closed. Nothing else should be tried.

(c) Insect bites, including wasp stings and bee stings, may respond to quick treatment by an alkali and give no further trouble. The domestic "blue bag" is useful or a paste made of damp bicarbonate of soda. It is not advisable for household ammonia to be kept for this purpose, unless it is stored in a safe place where there is no danger of children inadvertently tasting it.

(d) Splinters of wood in hands, feet, thighs or buttocks. The limb should on no account be soaked in water or the wood will become soft and brittle. These casualties are best dealt with by skilled personnel if the clinic is near at hand. Failing this, splinter forceps should be kept so that any obvious protrusion can be seized and held firmly until the whole piece is withdrawn. If this fails no further attempt should be made by the first aid worker and skilled medical help should be sought immediately.

(e) Nose bleeding. This usually responds to simple measures. The child should be encouraged to avoid the temptation to blow his nose. Cold applications to the nose and reassurance may be required; lying down is helpful.

2. *Injuries and Emergencies which should have Medical Advice Later in the Day.*

(a) All burns and scalds. It cannot be too clearly understood that burns and scalds can be dangerous to a small child's life however trivial they appear. This is particularly true when they occur on the chest or the back, the buttocks being next in order of danger. Every child who incurs a burn or scald in school should be treated by medical personnel, after first aid treatment has been given.

(b) All injuries to bones and joints. Children may suffer injury to bones without gross deformity or severe shock occurring. The bone may bend without actually breaking (the well-named greenstick fracture) or the growing end

of the bone (the epiphysis) may become displaced in relation to the main part of the bone. The arms are the most likely to be injured in this way.

(c) More severe cuts, abrasions and bruises. Any cut, other than the most trifling, may need a stitch to facilitate healing and ensure a neat scar. Treatment to avoid sepsis may be necessary.

(d) Foreign bodies in the eye and nose not responding to simple measures and foreign bodies in the ear. Any attempt to do more than the simple measures already suggested will hurt the child, do no good, and make the doctor's task more difficult.

(e) Stings not responding to first aid treatment.

(f) Splinters not responding to first aid treatment.

(g) A child who has pushed his head through some railings and cannot be extricated. The doctor or the nurse with midwifery training is the most likely person to understand how to manipulate the head to get the narrowest diameter through the railing and release the child.

(h) A foreign body in the breathing tubes. Any hard object in the mouth, e.g. a marble or boiled sweet, may "go the wrong way" if some unexpected movement occurs such as tripping on a step, and the object may block up the airway to the lungs instead of travelling to the stomach. Usually the foreign body is coughed up, but if the child goes blue and cannot get rid of the obstruction it may be possible to reach and remove it with the finger. A small child may be held upside down by its heels while slapping it on the back. It is rare for such an obstruction to endanger life, but should there be any doubt as to whether the whole of the foreign body has been ejected, medical advice must be sought as complications may ensue.

(i) A child who has a fit or a convulsion. Some object such as a spoon handle should be placed between the teeth to prevent the tongue being bitten. The child may be subject to fits or may have one as the onset of some feverish illness. Usually the patient revives fairly quickly from the fit but it is necessary to obtain medical advice.

3. *Emergencies which must have Immediate Medical Attention*

Most of these should be sent direct to the casualty department of the nearest hospital, without wasting time by what will probably be an intermediate visit to the clinic, where only nursing staff may be available. The ambulance service should be called and the simplest first aid treatment given that will make the patient fit for the journey. Do not add to the shock by disturbing the patient more than is absolutely necessary.

These include—

- (a) Serious cuts and lacerations and penetrating wounds.
- (b) Suspected fractures, particularly of the lower limbs or of the skull.
- (c) Severe burns and scalds.
- (d) Poisoning such as might occur if lysol or ammonia is swallowed.
- (e) Fits (convulsions) from which the child does not rapidly recover, or repeated convulsions.

Some General Principles of First Aid

1. *Bleeding.* To stop bleeding always progress from the simple to the more elaborate method. In other words—

- (a) First apply a pad and pressure to the bleeding point. Remember bleeding is stopped by clotting, do not disturb the clot.
- (b) Next raise the limb.
- (c) If these simple methods fail and the bleeding point is below the elbow or below the knee try the pad and flexion method, namely a pad in the flexure of the elbow or knee with the limb kept fully bent.
- (d) If this method is not applicable, control the bleeding by pressure on the nearest point, that is a point nearer the heart where the artery passes close to a bony surface and can be flattened by pressure.

(e) As a last and rarely needed resort apply a tourniquet to the thigh or upper arm, taking care to release it briefly every 20 minutes and taking care to label the patient with an obvious notice saying "Tourniquet applied at—o'clock."

(f) Dry dressings should be applied to wounds as a first aid measure.

2. *Fractures.* The object of first aid to a fracture is to keep the broken parts from moving about. To achieve this no movement must be possible at the joints above and below the injury. Therefore the splints must extend above and below these joints and control them securely.

All splints must be padded to avoid damage to underlying tissues when they are firmly bandaged in place. Newspaper is a useful emergency padding.

If any doubt exists treat the case as a fracture rather than a sprain.

Treatment for shock should be given.

3. *Burns or Scalds.* Cover the area with a clean dry dressing (a towel will serve if the area is extensive), bandage firmly over a padding of wool and give treatment for shock. A lotion dressing such as lint moistened with cold tea or with a solution of bicarbonate of soda may be used. Ointments and oils are on no account to be used. Should clothing be sticking to the area, as might occur after the child's clothes have caught fire, it should not be removed but the dressing applied on top of it or the child simply rolled in a blanket.

4. *Shock.* The classical first aid treatment for the shock accompanying accidents, particularly burns, scalds, fractures, and crushing injuries, is to supply warmth, reassurance and hot sweet tea or coffee. The patient should not be hurried to move but should be helped eventually to place himself in the most comfortable position he can find. He should be wrapped in a blanket. If a hot water bottle is used it must be protected by a cover, lest the patient become unconscious and unable to recognize when his skin is in contact with uncomfortable heat, and so fail to move away from it and incur severe burns.

5. *Electric Shock.* Switch off the current if possible before rendering first aid. If this is not possible try to avoid touching metals and wet objects which conduct electricity well, and hold or stand on poor conductors such as rubber. Give artificial respiration, if necessary, and treat as for burns and shock.

6. *Poisoning.* Distinguish between corrosive and non-corrosive poisons. If the bottle which

has been sampled is not available, examine the lips or mouth for signs of damage by a corrosive liquid. Give long drinks of weak acids or alkali, whichever is the appropriate antidote when the poison is corrosive. Lemon juice or diluted vinegar are useful weak acids, while a solution of bicarbonate of soda is a readily available alkali. When the poison is non-corrosive make the patient vomit to get rid of poison still lying in the stomach. Salt and water or mustard and water should produce vomiting. Keep any vomit for the doctor to inspect.

Conclusion

This brief account of the principles of first aid and the precautions and action to be taken is not intended to replace a first aid course, nor can one cover every emergency, likely and unlikely, in the space available. What has been written will have served its purpose if for some teachers it has acted as a refresher course, and for others stimulated interest, and given guidance in difficulties which are especially likely to be encountered in the infant school.

THE NURSERY SCHOOL

The Need for the Nursery School

THE Nursery School is the foundation of our national system of education, providing for the nurture as well as the education of the pre-school child. Formerly the body was considered as a thing apart from the mind, but in later days we have come to see that the connection between the two is very intimate, especially during the earliest years of life. The experiences of these first few years do more to determine character, habits and intellectual interests than do those of any other stage.

Before the advent of the Nursery School the element of nurture was almost entirely absent from the education of the people, and no suitable provision was made for the child between two and five years of age

The Question of Health

There is a dangerous gap in the medical supervision of children between the age of two when the mother often ceases to take her child to the Welfare Centre and the age of five when he usually enters the Infant School and passes into the care of the School Medical Officer. This fact is recognized by the Ministry of Health, and in its publication, Circular 1550, the local authorities are urged to provide for

the regular medical inspection of the pre-school child in Toddlers' Clinics. This scheme should not only do much towards preventing disease, but also to improving the health of our young children. As Sir Kingsley Wood stated in an address to the National Insurance Conference, "It is not enough to protect the individual or the community from disease, we must more and more be health builders."



FIG. 1

A group of newcomers to the Nursery School

All-round Development

Now the Nursery School is specially planned to meet the needs of the young child. It is concerned with his whole development, physical, intellectual, social, and moral. It provides a safe, happy, and carefully planned environment where these children may be gathered to-

gether in the care of specially trained teachers, and where they find freedom for development.

"What should we wish for our children?" asked Margaret McMillan, the great pioneer of the Nursery School Movement. "Sunshine and space, colour and human culture. All that is best and most helpful—all we can think of that is fairest."

The Open-air Nursery School

Here in the open-air Nursery School—for almost all our Nursery Schools are now of the open-air type—we offer these gifts to the little

child. The garden is the centre of his universe—but it is a real child's garden, full of things that

that the children are glad to come inside to seek comfort in the warm and cosy nursery.



FIG. 2

Feeding the pigeons

stimulate and interest him, full of suggestions for happy constructional play. There are pets here for him to tend: rabbits, guinea-pigs, pigeons, perhaps a hen and chickens. There are trees and flowers, little steps and paths to negotiate. There may be a sand pit and a paddling pool, a jungle-gym and a slide. The shelter is the refuge into which he can run to seek protection from excessive heat or from the cold or rain, but the healthy, normal child is happiest in the garden. Only those who teach in open-air schools can realize this to the full, for they know how difficult it is to keep the children under cover on a wet day—how they delight to escape and splash through the puddles and hold their little faces up to the sky to feel the falling drops. It is only when the cold east wind is blowing, when the fog has descended like a thick yellow cloud or the rain is driving,

middle class children and which is self-supporting. There is also the Emergency Nursery School

Different Types of School

Nursery Schools and Nursery Departments, of which there are about 500 in Great Britain, are of many types to meet the special needs of the children of the district which they serve. There is the large school in the crowded area built to accommodate from one hundred and twenty to two hundred and sixty children: this is usually under the control of the local Education Authority. There is the school built under the auspices of the building society to accommodate the children of the tenants of a block of flats. There is the school which is run in connection with a settlement, and the school which is intended for the



FIG. 3

Enjoying a splash in the Paddling Pool

of the distressed area to which reference will be made later.

The Staff

The life in the Nursery School should approximate closely to the life in a well-ordered home. For this reason the number of children gathered together in one nursery or shelter should not be large.

The Board of Education allows one certificated and trained teacher to each group of forty children. The teacher or superintendent, as she is called, must have further help, and this is given in some cases by an assistant who is trained but not certificated, sometimes by girls of seventeen or eighteen who have just left the Secondary School and are waiting to enter College; sometimes by girls of fourteen to sixteen who have just left the Elementary School and who wish to become children's nurses at a later date.

School Routine

The hours are longer than those of the Elementary School. The Nursery School which serves a poor area usually opens its doors at eight o'clock or eight-thirty and does not close until five or five-thirty. This means that the mother is free for the whole day should she have to go to work. It also means that the superintendent has more or less control of the child's diet five days of the week—for breakfast, dinner, and tea can be supplied at the Nursery School—the little one only returning home to go to bed. It has been stated that some of our Nursery Schools accommodate as many as two hundred to two hundred and fifty children. When this is the case the whole community is in reality made up of a number of small schools accommodating from thirty-five to forty children in different shelters or open-air classrooms. These children do not meet together for assembly in the morning or for any other purpose—they only meet one another in the garden, so that the child in the large Nursery School need never have the lonely feeling he might experience as one of a crowd, neither is he unduly exposed to the dangers of infection. Should there be an outbreak of infectious disease in one of the shelters the remaining children in that shelter can readily be isolated from the rest of the school.

Premises

The nursery provided for the accommodation of thirty-five to forty children is usually about twenty by forty feet in dimension. It should provide easy access to the garden and should have large windows of the "Esavian" type, or large doors opening outwards. The children should be able to look out on trees, green places, and garden beds. The nursery itself must be carefully planned. One of the child's greatest needs is freedom—opportunity to develop his larger muscles by running and climbing, jumping and sliding, therefore we must give him plenty of floor space. His nursery should be a gay cheery place, warm and inviting. The pictures should be carefully chosen and few in number, they should be changed according to the season.

Equipment

The little chairs and tables for his use must be light and low so that they can be readily stacked away and the child himself can assist in clearing the room when preparation must be made for meal-time or for rest periods. The toys should be kept in low cupboards built round the walls of the room. The child must be allowed to help himself to these toys and encouraged to pack them away when he is ready for another form of activity.

The bathroom and lavatories should lead directly from the nursery so that the child can be trained in good personal habits of health and cleanliness.

The lavatory seats should be low and so should the little hand basins. The baths on the other hand should be raised from the ground as here the comfort of the teacher must be taken into consideration. Bathing can be a back-breaking occupation when the family is large. In one Nursery School I know, it is part of the ceremony of bathing to move a light pair of steps up to the bath and mount them alone in solemn preparation for the event. In some Nursery Schools many of the children are bathed each day, not necessarily because they are dirty, but because the exercise in the bath is pleasant and exhilarating for the child, and because the

teacher understands a great deal more about his physical condition after she has performed this service for him.

Types of Activity

The fundamental activities of the little child can be regarded as falling into two groups. On

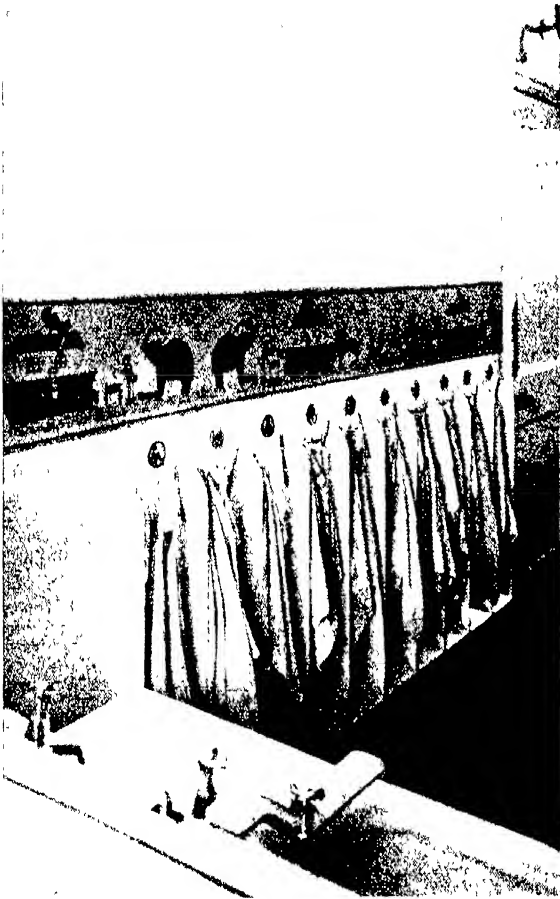


FIG. 4

A corner of the bathroom

the one hand he has certain bodily needs such as hunger, the necessity for sleep and for elimination, on the other hand he has certain needs equally compelling but less specific which can meet satisfaction in a variety of ways—the need for bodily movement, for sensory experience, for experiment and adventure.

The Nursery School day is divided into two main periods—routine and free activity. During the period set aside for routine the child learns

how to wash and dress himself, how to eat, how to behave at table, how to prepare himself for sleep. He establishes regular habits of elimination and sleep. The routine of the day is carefully planned and seldom should anything be allowed to interfere with it, for the young child is very conservative in his outlook and it disturbs and irritates him if he has to wait for his dinner or if his mid-day sleep is cut short. He does not like to be hurried when he is washing his hands, laying the dinner table or putting on his shoes. It is a very important part of his education that he should learn to do all these routine duties well and that he should have leisure in which to do them.

The Two-year-old Child

When the two-year-old first comes to the Nursery School he is usually quite incapable of washing himself, and therefore quite ready to accept the ministrations of the teacher. But in a few weeks' time we find him asserting his independence. He has watched the vigorous performance of the older children first with interest and then with envy. "Gi'me the soap!" he says one day, pushing aside the kindly intentioned adult who essays to help him. "I want to wash mine own self." What a serious business it is, this washing! First the child has to find his own niche in the bathroom where, on low pegs, his towel, flannel and toothbrush hang. He can recognize his own corner by the symbol painted above it—a mouse perhaps, or it may be an aeroplane. He must first take down his towel and flannel and carry them to the little low basin provided; then there is the joy of turning on the taps—hot and cold—and testing the water. The soap too is quite delightful, so slippery, so frothy, so unexpected in its behaviour. When his hands are clean there comes the thrill of pulling out the plug and watching the water go merrily gurgling down the pipe. Now all the small pink fingers must be carefully dried and the towel and flannel returned to their pegs. Finally the hands are held up for inspection and the satisfied expression on the child's face shows the pride he has felt in his own performance. He feels that he has accomplished something worth while, and feels that pride in achievement which is the reward of effort.

The Trained Teacher and the Untrained Helper

In the bathroom we see the difference between the untrained helper and the Nursery School teacher. The former feels that she has not done her duty unless she herself has washed and dressed her charges. She is thorough and she bustles. If she did not bustle she would not consider herself capable. The Nursery School teacher has trained herself to stand aside and watch the child struggle with his own difficulties. She is at hand if he needs her but she does not interfere, for she knows that he must learn through his own failures. It is for her to see that the task he is set is not too difficult or he may become discouraged. But neither must these tasks become too easy for in this case he will be bored. And as no healthy normal child will consent to remain bored, he will seek new interests and will probably begin by interfering with other children. He is then termed troublesome.

Nursery School Meals

Meal-times constitute a very important part of the Nursery School regime. The diet is carefully planned and includes one pint of milk a day for each child.

Dietitians urge the importance of a liberal supply of protein during the periods of rapid growth. This is often deficient in an ordinary diet because of the difficulty and expense of obtaining first-class protein—such as is found in beef, mutton, fish, milk, eggs, and cheese. The next most important factor in diet is fat. Weight for weight, this gives more than twice as many units of energy as either proteins or carbohydrates, and it is particularly valuable as a heat-producing food.

Fat is stored by the body against emergencies—it strengthens the resistance to infection and to certain diseases. It is found in meat, fish,



FIG. 5

Washing is a serious business

milk, cream, cheese, eggs, butter, margarine, and dripping. Care must be taken not to give fat in large quantities as it cannot be assimilated quickly. If a child finds difficulty in digesting fat it is a good plan to give him a piece of barley sugar after his meal.

Carbohydrates give heat and energy. They can be absorbed quickly and easily. They are cheap and easy to obtain and are found in sugar, wheat, rice, vegetables, and fruits.

Mineral salts are indispensable to growth and nutrition. They are of great importance in making bone and teeth. Phosphorus and most other salts are supplied in all food but the ordinary diet frequently lacks iron and calcium. Iron is found in fruit juice, beef juice, eggs, and spinach, calcium in milk, eggs, and green vegetables.

Vitamins

Vitamins A, B, C, and D are of special importance in the diet of the pre-school child.

Vitamin A is necessary for growth and is a protection against disease. It is found in milk, butter, egg yolk, cod liver oil, etc.

Vitamin B is also necessary for growth and digestion and is present in milk, eggs, fresh fruit, and vegetables.

Vitamin C is helpful in preventing skin

troubles and dental caries. It is found in raw fruits, raw vegetables, tomatoes, and milk.

Vitamin D is a protection against rickets and is obtained in butter, egg yolk, and cod liver oil.

Water for Drinking

Water is an important constituent of the body which must be constantly replaced—it is a carrier of food to the tissues and of waste away from them. It is more necessary to the child than to



FIG. 6

Dinner-time in the Nursery School

the adult and "drinks of water" at specified times should be a part of the nursery school routine.

A Suitable Menu

The following menu is suggested for use in a Nursery School—

| | |
|------------------|---|
| <i>Breakfast</i> | Porridge and milk—fruit, wholemeal bread and butter. |
| <i>Tea</i> | Wholemeal bread and butter with jam, fruit or cheese and sometimes home-made cake. Milk or cocoa. |
| <i>Dinner</i> | Minced beef with carrots, turnips, onions, cabbage, and potatoes. |
| Monday | Rice pudding and raisins. |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Tuesday | Vegetable stew made with bone stock and potatoes. Boiled suet pudding and treacle. |
| Wednesday | Scrambled eggs with peas and potatoes. Baked batter pudding. |
| Thursday | Minced liver with vegetables as with meat and potatoes. Blancmange and fruit. |
| Friday | Creamed fish, tomatoes and potatoes. Banana custard. |

Rusks should be served with every dinner and a portion of apple every day. A teaspoonful of cod liver oil may be given to each child daily during the winter months.

Dinner-time

Dinner-time is a jolly time in the Nursery School. When they sit down to this meal the children are tired out with healthy play and they make good trenchermen. The preparation is somewhat of a rite. Toys must be put away when dinner-time is announced; hands and faces washed, tables prepared. Certain of the children are chosen to spread the cloths, put flowers on the table and lay the plates and spoons in their proper places. Much incidental training in number is given here—formal number teaching finds no place in the Nursery School. This laying of the tables is taken most seriously, it is like playing at house on a large scale. When dinner is ready, grace is sung and the children help themselves to the dishes handed round by one of their number or by a teacher. After the first pangs of hunger are satisfied they often settle down to a good gossip. Confidences are exchanged about home matters, size of helpings compared, different menus discussed. Albert hands round the dinner. Surreptitiously he places a broad thumb on the piece he covets for himself. "Take your fumb orf that piece, Albert," says sharp little Mabel. "You're cheating, you are!"

The newcomer to the Nursery School is often peevish and irritable at meal-times. Perhaps he has come from a poor home and has never been used to sitting up at table. His meals have consisted of bits given to him from the plates of his elders or slices of bread and margarine to be eaten on the doorstep. Perhaps he is the spoilt darling of doting parents and has learned that the way to attract attention is to refuse his meals. Little attention is paid to him in the nursery when he voices his dislike to the food that is placed before him. It smells very tempting and his companions appear to enjoy it thoroughly and so after a few protests he joins them, entering into their conversation and exchanging views with them as to what may be expected for "afters" or pudding that day.

Arrangements for Rest

When dinner is over it is time to prepare for rest. A visit must be paid to the bathroom first. Here handkerchief drill is taken. Then the little low canvas beds must be set out, if the weather is suitable in the garden. Each child then prepares for bed by taking off his shoes and socks and wrapping himself in his cosy blanket when the weather is at all chilly. Then the little ones snuggle down and peace descends upon the nursery. Often the teacher in charge will play soft music until the last restless little person is off to the Land of Nod.

The Formation of Good Habits

During the routine periods of the Nursery School day the child is guided towards the formation of habits of personal hygiene. The remainder of the day is spent in that free activity which, if wisely directed is as important in his development as the mastery of routine.

Here again we must stress the fact that unless the teacher who is in charge of the school is a student of child nature—unless she knows some-

thing of the child's needs, capacities and developmental possibilities—much of this time may be wasted, and instead of developing on the right lines the child may be forming undesirable and antisocial habits.

Free Activity

His activity should be characterized by spontaneity and freedom. The right to experiment should be his and the opportunity to develop



FIG. 7

Off to the Land of Nod

individual skills, and above all to choose his own occupations. The teacher should not interfere with his freedom by making definite suggestions or giving specific directions.

How then can she influence him during this period of free activity? The answer to this question is that it is her responsibility after a very careful study of his interests and needs to select the play material which is at his disposal and to plan the environment in which his plays are carried out. Having done this, she should leave him free to experiment and to learn by and through his own experience.

There will be times, of course, when she must interfere. She must safeguard her children from the accidents which might occur if their play became too venturesome. She must interfere

when certain social problems arise—when a big child snatches the toy from a little companion

together the materials he needs for his play beforehand, showing that he has a definite idea in his mind and that he has every intention of carrying it out. One activity leads on to another and when the four-year-old changes his play activity it is often easy for the adult to understand the reason why he has done so—to follow the trend of his thoughts.

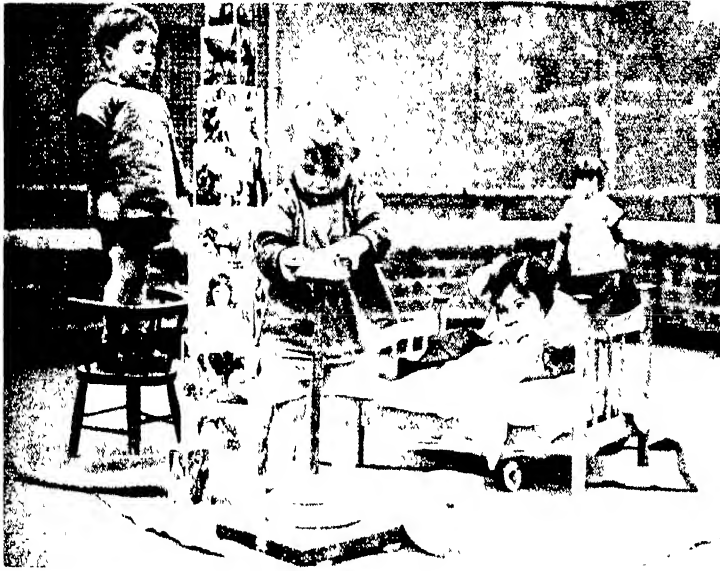


FIG. 8

Two year olds at play

who is powerless to help himself, when a dispute occurs which cannot be satisfactorily settled by the children themselves, when the children in a particular group are persistently unkind to one member. These and many other situations will arise during the course of a Nursery School day and must be dealt with by the Nursery School teacher.

The Toddler at Play

The play life of the little child is destined to develop into the more orderly work and play of the adult. Between these two stages a number of phases may be traced.

The play activity of the toddler or two-year-old child is characterized by quick change from one object to another—the transition taking place without any apparent sequence or reason. The four-year-old with his greater power of concentration usually elects to spend a longer period of time on any one activity. He often gathers

unless he can enlist the help of an adult of whom he makes use to pick up the bricks when they

The Toddler Contrasted with the Four-year-old

Let us watch the toddler and the four-year-old child playing with building blocks or with paints. The toddler carries the blocks from place to place dropping them heavily on the floor with a loud bang which pleases him immensely. If he has a small



FIG. 9

"This is my Mum"

fall or to lift the cart up and down the steps of the shelter. Sometimes he piles the bricks up into a high tower for the joy of throwing them down again.

The four-year-old uses the blocks to build a house, a garage or a station. He usually chooses to play with two or three other children and though he often quarrels with them he enjoys their company. When he is tired of playing with his garage in the shelter he will perhaps run outside, climb on the garden seat, announce that he is a bus driver and call loudly for passengers.

The toddler finding himself in possession of coloured chalks or paints spends a very enjoyable time splashing colours on paper fixed to the blackboard, or an easel. His joy is in the exercise of the activity. Ask him what he is painting and he will only give you a look of bewilderment. He does not know.

The four-year-old also enjoys "splashing" for the sheer delight of mixing the colours, but he is usually ready to tell you what his symbols stand for. "This is my mum," he will say, "and that is our house, that is." It is characteristic of his stage of development that he is quite pleased with his own efforts. He neither asks for nor needs criticism.

The Older Nursery School Child

I was watching a six-year-old girl painting a little while ago. She was standing at her easel quite absorbed in her work. First a motor car appeared quite recognizable—then a stout lady carrying a basket. The artist paused and looked up. "Oh dear!" she cried. "My old lady's going to get run over! Quick! I'll put a 'Lisha Beacon.'" Rapidly and breathlessly she sketched the Beacon, thus saving the old lady from destruction.

Change of Occupation

Experiments made in St. George's School for

Child Study show that when children are playing spontaneously and freely, when there is plenty of play material, the two-year-old tends to concentrate on one activity for a period of $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, the three-year-old for $4\frac{1}{2}$ and the four-year-old for $5\frac{1}{2}$ minutes respectively. Thus the two-year-old will make on an average 24 changes during an hour's play, though he may of course return again and again to the toy he discarded a little while ago. Observations carried out in this same school showed that there was a tendency on the part of the children to turn from a strenuous activity to some quieter occupation. Accordingly their material was set out in such a way that they could easily make this change. The hammering toys, the carpentering outfit, and trucks were set out at one end of the shelter while the doll's house and different table toys (puzzles, insets, etc.) were to be found at the other end. It was easy for the child when he was tired of a noisy occupation to leave the table

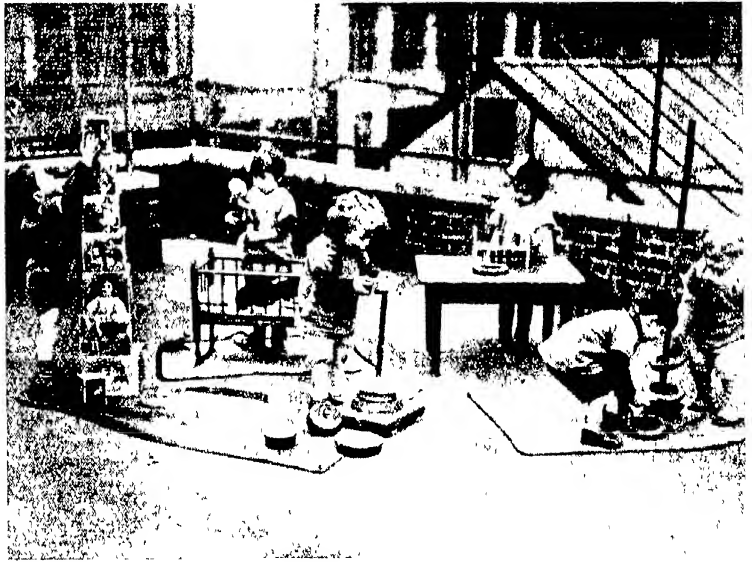


FIG. 10

The joy of achievement

where hammering was going on and seek the comparative quiet of the corner where the puzzles were displayed.

Allowance for Concentration

It must be remembered that although the pre-school child demands a constant change of

occupation there are certain times, especially when he is developing a new skill, when he concentrates for considerable periods on a given piece of apparatus. A toddler will sometimes sit for twenty minutes at a time working at the hammer toy or the peg board. It is easy to see from his face that he is experiencing the pleasure that comes with the achievement of power over material things.

Once I took a party of Japanese teachers over a Nursery School, and we paused beside the slide to watch the efforts of a determined and very fat small boy who climbed the steps laboriously, and slowly slid down the incline, picked himself up and climbed again, going through the whole performance at least twenty times. One of the visitors had been watching him intently and with some concern. He turned to me and remarked, "It is truly admirable, Miss—this—what you call concentration of the little boy. But, pardon me—if he goes on so long time will he not hurt that upon which he sits?" Peter had no time to think of possible aches and pains in any part of his anatomy. He was entirely occupied in developing a new skill.

Suitability of Material for Play

One of the problems with which the Nursery School teacher is confronted is to find play

material suitable for the children in her care. If the material which is given to the child is too difficult for him to manipulate, the probability is that after he has made several attempts to master it he will lose interest, give up the struggle and throw aside the toy. He will experience a sense of failure—and too many experiences of this kind may result in a feeling of inability to launch out on a new experiment. If, on the other hand, he is provided with material which is too easy for him he becomes bored and is inclined to interfere with the occupation of his neighbours.

The Young Beginner

The play materials chosen for the pre-school child should make provision for his physical, intellectual and social development. When the toddler first comes to the Nursery School he has often still to learn bodily control and the co-ordination of the large bodily muscles. He should have plenty of space to run about, small steps to negotiate, opportunities to climb, to balance. He should be allowed to take his own time and to make these experiments when and just as often as he chooses. He likes to trot round the garden dragging a cart load of small stones after him. He watches the older children at play but as a rule he does not care to join them. He sits down quietly for a while when he is tired of the more active play and works at some of the simpler forms of insets such as the peg board. He finds great enjoyment in the use of the hammer toy and the posting box.

He enjoys the physical experience of digging up the sand in the sand pit, filling his pail and emptying it again, pouring the sand from one receptacle to another. He likes to pound and roll soft clay making so-called balls and "worms" and leaving the impress of his fingers in it. He learns much incidentally when he trots round the garden carrying perhaps a teddy bear or



FIG. 11

The toddlers playing in the sandpit

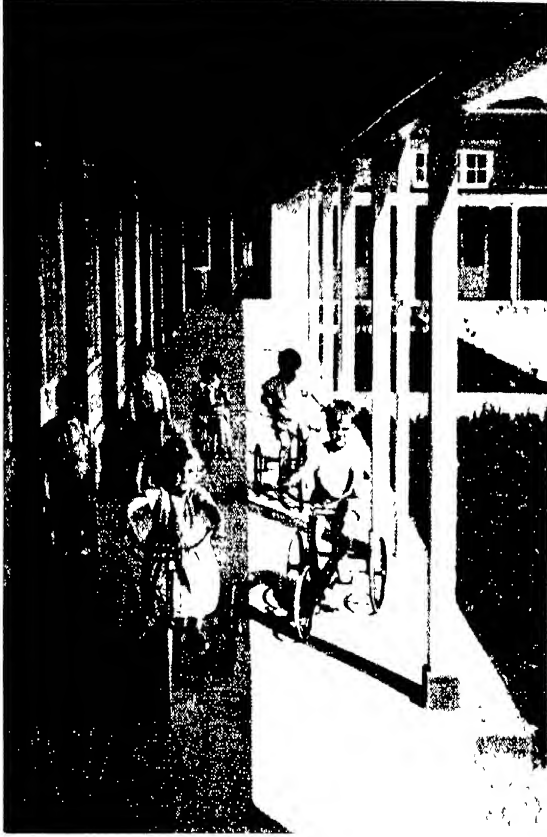


FIG. 12
Off for a ride

a rabbit for company, visiting the pet animals, turning up the rockery stones to hunt for "beedles," watching the sparrows taking their morning bath and the cat who is sitting in the sun making her toilet in her usual meticulous fashion

The Four-year-old Plays

The four-year-old also needs space to run about and simple pieces of apparatus on which he may learn to develop bodily skills; he visits the ribstalls, the slide, and the jungle-gym in turn. Tricycles are much in demand at this stage; whether it is because of the added speed with which

the child can get about or whether it is pleasure in the physical activity itself it is difficult to say. The four-year-old girl enjoys taking her family for an airing in a doll's perambulator, and she is sometimes accompanied by a small boy wheeling a truck or riding a hobby horse.

The sand pit has a great attraction for the four-year-old, but he uses the sand as a material through which he can express his ideas. He builds castles and shops, lays out gardens and parks. He waters the sand, noticing that he can work with it more easily when it is damp, and that the addition of water causes it to change its colour. He also likes working with clay, making cups and shells, beads and birds' nests.

He is interested in all forms of domestic life, and is usually just as eager as the little girls to play at "washing day," to spring clean the doll's house, to make cakes for tea, to clean the spoons, his own shoes or the shelter windows. He likes to see the results of his labour, to direct attention to the polished spoons and to see the cake he has made on his own tea-table. He is interested in constructive work, and if he is given scissors, paste and a box of waste materials (cotton reels, corks, skewers, paper, empty match boxes) he will spend a happy time making models which he calls motor cars or houses and



FIG. 13
Four-year-olds at play

which, indeed, stand for any object in which he happens to be interested at the time.

Community Life

One of the lessons a child has to learn when he comes to the Nursery School is how to adjust

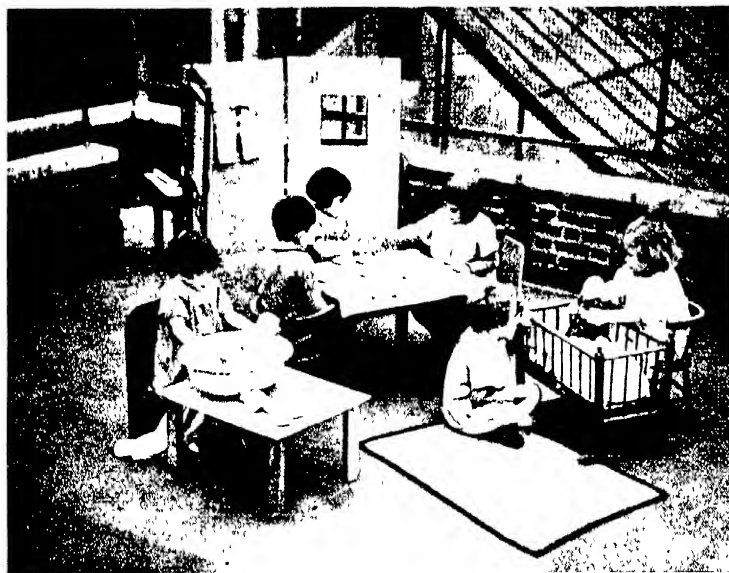


FIG. 14
Playing at house

himself to life in a community. The two-year-old, when he first finds himself in the midst of small strangers, is frankly bewildered and often rather unhappy. He plays alone or with an adult, and he only asks of the other children that they will leave him in peace and not interfere with him or take away his toys. As he becomes more used to his surroundings he begins to take an interest in his compeers and in the large and important four-year-old. He will stand at the foot of the jungle-gym admiring some strapping fellow who is waving his hand as he clings to the topmost bar. He will sit on the shelter steps watching a party of little girls playing at "Mothers and babies." But not often can he be cajoled into taking the part of the "baby." He is not ready for such social participation—he prefers the role of the watcher.

His first social approaches are usually of a somewhat aggressive nature. He may poke or slap his neighbour, take his chair or run away with his toy. Then there will be a scrap.

Social and Independent Play

"Parallel play" is the simplest form of social play and is seen when two children are carrying on the same activity side by side, digging in the sand pit or working at their playboards. Their actions are quite independent, but they are evidently enjoying one another's society.

The three- and four-year-old children will often play together in little groups, but these groups must be of their own making and they will frequently be broken up. They play games such as "hospitals," "mummies and daddies," "bus driving," but they find it difficult to share, and to take turns is too difficult a form of social adjustment to expect from them.

When the toddler enters the Nursery School he may be said to be devoid of social tendencies. In the Nursery School he has the opportunity of participating in a society where he can and must make his own contacts. In this

environment he has the freedom necessary for experience and experiment.



FIG. 15
Social play

The Day's Programme

Perhaps it would be as well now to give a short account of a day in the life of a child attending an open-air Nursery School in the east end of

London. His name is Peter and he is wheeled to school each day by his elder sister Rosie in a little wooden cart. The early morning is an uncomfortable time in Peter's home. Everyone is inclined to be irritable and there is much to do and a very small space in which to do it. Peter is left to lie until the last moment in the big bed he shares with two others. Then he is picked up and hustled into his clothes; he is given a large piece of bread and "marge" wrapped in a newspaper. Now there is nothing Peter dislikes so much as to be hurried, and so, clasping his parcel tightly to his chest, he wails loudly as he is trundled off. He does not want his bread and marge, he knows that a hot breakfast awaits him at the Nursery School, but he clings to it because it affords him a queer kind of comfort.

Arrival at School

Rosie pushes open the gate of the nursery and wheels in her young charge. She enjoys this part of her day's programme for she used to go to the Nursery School herself and she still takes a lively interest in the family of guinea pigs and in the canaries. Peter's wails have subsided by this time and he is ready to greet his teacher as she comes forward to speak to Rosie. She runs a practised eye over Peter's face and seeing no suspicious signs of the onset of any of the childish complaints she says "Good morning" to him and sends him off to the bathroom. But first she asks him to give up his unappetizing parcel. This he does quite willingly.

Toilet and Breakfast

In the bathroom Peter meets another "Nursie" and several of his friends. Some of the children are washing, some are cleaning their teeth, and others are getting ready for the bath. To his great delight Peter hears that he is to have a bath. Off with his cumbersome garments which have been put on so quickly and care-

lessly and then splash! He is lying in the hot water contemplating his small pink toes. For a time he is very busy and very important as he rubs the soap on his flannel, but there comes a stage when even he admits that a little assistance is necessary, and he allows his nurse to "finish him off." When he is dressed he is wearing a



FIG. 16

"This is how we do it"

brightly coloured overall, and possibly a few superfluous garments have been shed. His hair is shining and glossy and his teeth are clean. He strolls into the nursery to find that breakfast awaits him—and a tempting breakfast consisting of porridge served with treacle and milk. He sits down at the table with seven other small people, says his grace and eats his meal in a leisurely manner. By the time it is over he is feeling at peace with the world. The sun is shining brightly so, demanding one of the large wooden engines, he sets off for the garden. By this time it is nearly ten o'clock and he spends a very happy hour playing by himself and watching the other children. When he is tired he wanders back to the shelter and sits down at one of the little tables where the insets are laid out. Soon he is very busy.

Music

One of the teachers sits down at the piano and plays a lively tune. Several of the children get



FIG. 17
Now for a bath

up and dance. But Peter does not want to dance to-day. He watches the others with interest, occasionally beating time with the little peg he is holding in his hand, and enjoying the rhythm.

Service at Dinner

He is beginning to feel hungry. Soon he and the rest of his little group go to the bathroom with their teacher to wash their hands and get ready for dinner. It is now a quarter to twelve. Dinner proves a thrilling time for Peter to-day because he has been chosen to hand the plates to the rest of the children who are sitting at his table. This makes him feel very important, as it is a difficult task to carry the plates of stew across the floor from the serving table. Peter frowns and purses his lips over the task; he heaves a great sigh of relief when it is

accomplished satisfactorily. As the meal draws to a close his head begins to nod, for he was wakened early from his sleep that morning. His big brother Johnnie shares his bed, and Johnnie has to deliver the early morning papers before he goes to school.

Once more Peter trots off to the bathroom, and when he returns his little bed with its cosy red blanket is a welcome sight. He is almost too sleepy to take off his shoes.

Sleep Time

He sleeps soundly till half past two, and when he awakes two or three curly heads are popping up from the beds around him. He sees that his "Nursie" is helping the children to get up, put on their shoes, fold their blankets and stack their beds in the cupboard. Now it is his turn, and soon he is out in the garden trotting round talking to the rabbits and the guinea pigs, watching the canaries and



FIG. 18
Rest time

chasing the pigeons. Some of the older children are busy with a percussion band. Peter watches them intently. He likes the drums best, and, when he goes back to his own shelter, he takes a drum from the cupboard and experiments with it.

Tea-time

The bell calls him in from the garden and he sits down to enjoy the last meal of the day. It

Holidays in the Country

Many Nursery School superintendents make a special point of taking their children away for a few weeks each year to the country or the seaside. The advantages of such a plan are obvious. To begin with it brings about a close co-operation between mother and teacher, for they must discuss the various expenses to be met, the state of the child's wardrobe and many other details in connection with his health and



FIG. 19

The Margaret McMillan House, Wrotham

is four o'clock and soon after five his mother will come to take him home. He eats his brown bread and butter with relish, crunches his apple and drinks his milk. Then he is ready to sit down by the fire; for it is growing cold and the sun has gone down. His teacher has set out picture books on one table, big wooden beads on another and there are chinks on a third. Peter sits down contentedly to turn over the pages of his book until he hears the voice of his "mum" hailing him from the open door. She has been out at work all day and now she has come to take her little boy home.

So with a goodbye to his "Nursie" Peter trots off happily, ready to relate all that has happened since Rosie brought him to school in the early morning.

his night habits. Usually the mothers begin to pay in for the children's holiday months before the event takes place, and the teacher learns much of the state of the family exchequer by the way in which these payments are made. Some Nursery Schools own a cottage or house in the country, some take their children to be the guests of a residential Training College during the summer vacation. A Country House was opened at Wrotham, Kent, last May in connection with the Rachel McMillan Training College for Nursery School teachers. It is to be used for the benefit of both the children and the students. The building of this house was made possible by the generosity of Miss Lettice Floyd, who was deeply interested in the work carried on by Miss Margaret McMillan.

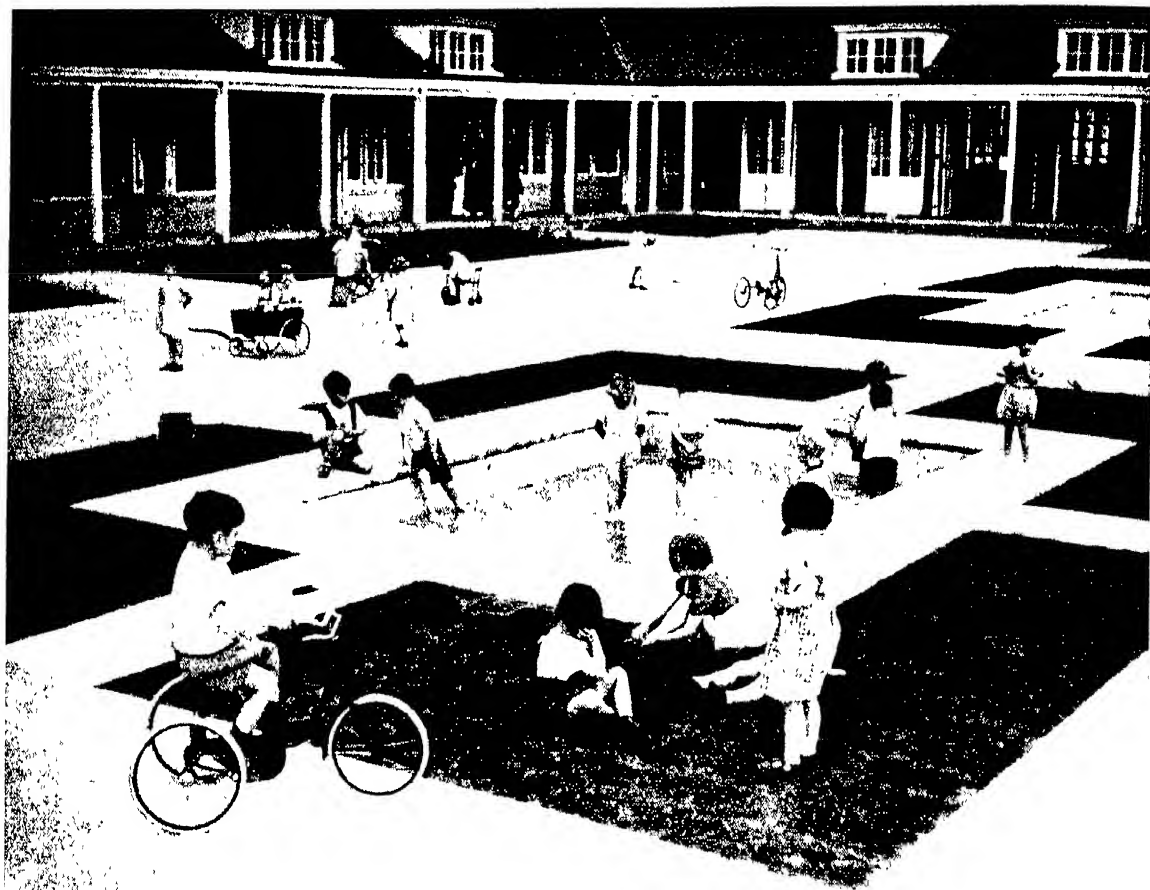


FIG. 20

The Quadrangle, Wrotham

The Margaret McMillan House at Wrotham

The Margaret McMillan House consists of two parts—a small house where the administrative work is carried on and a long low stretch of buildings of the bungalow type fitted out for the children and students.

The House stands in 18 acres of ground and is open for eight months during the year, from April till November. The children from the Nursery School are taken there in groups of forty at a time in the care of their own teachers, seven students from the Training College accompanying the party.

The Management of the House

The Warden in charge of the House is a fully trained Domestic Science teacher and she is

responsible for all the domestic arrangements; she budgets for the children as well as for the students. The students' work is planned so that they have an opportunity of working in the kitchen under the guidance of the Warden, learning how to plan the children's meals and how to cook and serve them. They spend a great deal of time with the children, helping to bath and dress them and learning how to attend to their needs by night as well as by day.

The Dormitories at the House

The children sleep in low beds set side by side in their open-air dormitories. Each bed is known to its occupant by the symbol affixed to it—a rabbit, a bird, a ship, etc. Beside each bed stands a little low wardrobe, and round the walls are gay friezes painted by the students. The

children's nursery is 60 feet by 20 feet in dimension and opens on to the garden on three sides. It is furnished with small chairs and tables and each child has a little locker marked by his own symbol, in which he can keep his treasures gleaned from the woods and meadows.

The Caretaker

Great favourites at the Country House are Uncle Charlie and Mrs. Uncle Charlie, the caretaker and his wife. Uncle Charlie always has an admiring audience when he is polishing the windows—little boys who tell him breathlessly that they have seen the big cow laying the milk for tea—little girls who beseech him to "mind" one of their numerous treasures in his big pockets while they go off on some expedition.

The Donkey and the Goat

Away across the big stretch of grass is a roomy comfortable stable, the night quarters of Polly Fairey the donkey and Toddles the goat. Polly Fairey is a lady of very decided views. She will submit to the dictates of Uncle Charlie and one or two of those students who happen to "have a way with them," otherwise she does exactly as she likes. She is always quite pleased to allow three small children to sit on her back as she grazes in the field, but she will only take them for a ride when politely requested to do so by one of the privileged few to whom she has given her friendship.

A sad story is told of one summer day, when Polly Fairey took it into her head to see the world and, kicking up her heels, galloped down the drive to the roadway. The alarm was raised and after her raced several students. Polly reached the roadway; the traffic was held up. She tossed her head and her heels and galloped

farther; a herd of cows crossing the road was thrown into confusion. The students tried to head her off. They implored and cajoled—all to no avail. Miraculously Uncle Charlie appeared upon the scene. He caught her bridle. "You come along home with me, old girl," he said. "You've missed the bus to-day." Polly Fairey turned round at once and walked home with him, casting a look of utter contempt at the group of hot and breathless students she left standing in the roadway.



FIG. 21

A dormitory at Wrotham

That night one of the little boys added this clause to his prayers, "Please God bless Polly Fairey and don't let her run away no more, and if she does, let Uncle Charlie catch her quick and bring her back so as I can ride her."

Woodland

A part of the land belonging to the Country House is wooded. It is starred with primroses, violets and blue bells in the spring, and in the autumn it yields nuts and berries. Here the children delight to go to pick the wild flowers and play hide-and-seek. It is a wonderful place for a picnic tea.

Advantages of Residence at the Margaret McMillan House

All the children in the Rachel McMillan School who are over the age of three years spend a month each year at the Margaret McMillan House. They return to Deptford in splendid condition, brown and rosy, with firm limbs and bright eyes. When the House was first opened there was some discussion as to the length of time the children should stay there. Some of the authorities considered that a fortnight should be a long enough period. Events have proved that they have benefited greatly from their lengthened stay. During the first week they put on practically no weight, during the second week there was a slight improvement, but in the last fortnight they put on an average of two and a half pounds. In some cases the debilitated children gained five to seven pounds. There were no "food problems." The children ate with enjoyment all that was set before them. They slept extremely well and the rest and quiet proved most beneficial to those who were highly strung and nervous.

But perhaps the most remarkable result of the month spent in this beautiful environment is the great stimulus it gives to the children's speech. Hitherto inarticulate little ones run to greet their friends, longing to pour out the story of their adventurous life in the country. This wonderful experience has had the effect of widening their interests and enlarging their vocabularies in an almost incredible manner.

Home Education in the Past

A generation ago we should all have agreed that the home was the place for the child under five, and the mother the fit and proper person to educate and care for him. But life was less complicated in those days. The authority of the parent was still unquestioned. Obedience was insisted upon and the child who was not content to leave his toy and run away to bed at the word of command was a naughty child. The phrase, "Mother knows best," was forever on the maternal lips, and if the child persisted in an argument father was called upon to settle

the matter. The situation is well summed up in the following Victorian poem—

*Mama had ordered Ann the maid
Miss Caroline to wash
And put on with her clean white frock
A handsome muslin sash.*

*But Caroline began to cry
For what I cannot think.
She said, "O, that's an ugly sash
I'll have my pretty pink."*

*Papa who in the parlour heard
Her make the noise and rout,
That instant went to Caroline
To whip her there's no doubt*

In this summary way Caroline's likes and dislikes were dismissed. Her parents were sure of themselves, of their own rectitude and their ability to deal wisely with the growing child. In a little book called "*L'Ami des Enfants*" there is a record of conversations held between a little girl Fanny Glassford and her devoted father. Here we are introduced to the over-anxious parent of two centuries ago. Mr. Glassford tells his child how it was that she learned to walk. "Your mother and I," he says, "put a bandage of velvet well stuffed about your head so that if you happened to fall you might not hurt yourself. We then held you by leading strings to assist your first attempts at walking and every day we went in the garden, upon the grass plot, when, placing ourselves opposite one another we put you down standing all alone between us and held out our arms inviting you to come sometimes to one, sometimes to the other. Your slightest stumble made our blood run cold. It was thus we taught you to walk." In this way the parents of the unfortunate Fanny stifled her attempts at self-development in their great desire to protect her from all ill. They, too, were convinced of their own wisdom and discretion.

Home Education in Modern Times

In these days not only do children question the wisdom of their parents as never before but the parents themselves are uneasy, uncertain how to deal with such problems as negativism, temper tantrums, fear of the dark. They are beginning to realize that every child must be treated with respect and that no two children

should be treated alike. The deep sense of responsibility felt by the mother for the welfare of her child sometimes makes for conflict and stress. Her anxiety reacts upon the child and makes him irritable and difficult to manage. And so she seeks the haven of the open-air Nursery School and the co-operation of the Nursery School teacher. No good work can be accomplished without this co-operation that is certain, and it is most important to note that the ultimate aim of both parent and teacher should be to help the child to become independent of either. The new generation must learn to walk along the path carved out for itself as a result of its own efforts.

Co-operation with the Parents

Every Nursery School has its Mothers' Club. Here the parents and teachers meet to discuss problems that confront them in their work with the little ones. The mother learns how her child has been behaving at school during the past week, and the teacher learns whether there has been any disturbance at home.

A Troublesome Child

Mrs. Smith brought her three-year-old son Bobbie to the Nursery School because he was so troublesome at home. Bobbie is the only child of a delicate mother. He is intelligent and he has a strong will to power. He is exceedingly interested in the world in which he lives, but the experiments he is constantly making upset the household and worry his parents. To quote his mother, "He won't sit still, and he will back answer, and his fingers are in everything from the blacking to the butter."

Bobbie is perfectly happy in the Nursery School. Here his superabundant energy finds an outlet. He can run about and shout to his heart's content. He can play with water and dig in the sand. His aggressive attitude to life soon disappears in this harmonious atmosphere. His health improves and so does his temper.

After a long and happy day spent in the Nursery School, he is ready to return to his home to a mother who is not too tired to listen to his account of all the wonderful things he has

seen and done. This mother begins to realize that the busy child is seldom, if ever, a naughty child and she tries to think out ways in which Bobbie can be happily occupied at home. Bobbie becomes a reformed character.

A "Negative" Child

Irene is a typically "negative" child. If a suggestion is made to her, her immediate reaction is to decline to fall in with it. Thus when she first came to school she declined to eat her food, she declined to play with the other children, and she would not go to sleep. It transpired as the result of a long conversation between the mother and the superintendent of the School that Irene had to obey five "grown-ups"—a granny, a father and mother and two aunts. This situation got on her nerves and her reaction was to defy them all. In the Nursery School she was allowed to go her own way. If she refused her food she was not pressed to take it; if she did not want to play with the other children, why then she was quite at liberty to play alone. And because the dinners smelt and tasted good, and because the other children played exciting games in which she longed to join, Irene soon fell into line and her behaviour became normal.

The Medical Examination

As a rule every child in the Nursery School visits the doctor at least once a term and the teacher and mother are both present at the examination. Thus if any special treatment is recommended such as a visit to the School Treatment Centre, the Sunlight Centre, the Child Guidance Clinic, it is their joint responsibility to see that this is carried out.

Sometimes the doctor, the dentist and the social worker at the Clinic will come to the Mothers' Club and give an informal talk on some topic of general interest. The more informal the talk the more useful it usually is and the more questions it calls forth. Sometimes the Club is affiliated to the Home and School Council of Great Britain, and in this case the parents have the great opportunity of taking

part in the national movement to encourage co-operation between parents and teachers.

The Financial Crisis and the Nursery School

In July, 1932, the Nursery School Movement was seriously threatened. The Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education announced that fifty-six Nursery Schools had been approved by the Board of Education and fifteen new



FIG. 22

*The Emergency Open Air Nursery School,
Middlesbrough*

schools would be recognized shortly. It was improbable, however, that more would be assisted for the present owing to the financial situation. The effect of this declaration was interesting. The friends and supporters of the Nursery School Movement banded together to form the Emergency Open-air Nursery School Association under the auspices of the Save the Children Fund and under the chairmanship of Mrs. Oliver Strachey. The Association pledged itself to open Nursery Schools in distressed areas, and to call upon unemployed men and women to help them in their task. It was felt that just because the country was passing through a time of financial stress, everything possible must be done to safeguard the health and education of the young children. The aim of the Association is to organize Nursery Schools in those districts where the children are in special danger of suffering by reason of the economic situation.

The Emergency Nursery School

It was decided to open the first Emergency Nursery School in Middlesbrough. Many children in this town were known to be in a bad condition physically owing to malnutrition and poor housing conditions, and there were a large number of unemployed men who were ready and willing to help with the building of a Nursery School. The site chosen was in the garden of the Settlement House and here, spurred on by the enthusiasm of the Warden, the unemployed men and members of the Service Club built the School. The only paid labour was for the putting in of the gas and electricity, for plumbing and for the fitting of the folding doors.

The building consists of one large shelter facing south with a small cloakroom and bathroom. The children's dinners were cooked in the kitchen of the Settlement. The cook or "dinner man" was unemployed at the time, and he gave his services until he was fortunate enough to obtain a post. He was then succeeded by the "Dinner Man Lady." He wrote to the Superintendent afterwards as follows—

"I have been asked if I think my work was worth while. Frankly it was—it became so interesting that I considered it the most important part of my whole career as a chef. As time went on I watched with interest the remarkable progress the children made, both physically and mentally and began to realize what a glorious inspiration it must be to the founders of the School."

The Beneficial Effects of the Emergency School

The change in the physical condition of these undernourished children after a few months in the Nursery School was amazing. Rickets disappeared, eyes became bright, complexion clear, bodies straight and sturdy. Soon the school was full and there was a waiting list of over two hundred children. The mothers helped in the kitchen and the laundry; the fathers mended the toys and cleaned the windows.

The Nursery was sponsored and the running costs met by the National Council of Women. But in June, 1934, it was recognized for grant

by the Board of Education, and since that date an additional shelter has been built so that the school can now accommodate sixty children.

The Development of the Emergency Nursery School Movement

The second emergency Open-air Nursery School was opened at Hoxton in rooms at the Holy Trinity Schools. The district was very depressing and the physical condition of the children poor. This school has done splendid pioneer work under very difficult conditions.

Two Emergency Schools were built in South Wales, one at Merthyr Tydfil and one at Brynmawr, three on Tyneside and one at Leeds. A ninth was later opened at Hebburn. These schools were eventually recognized by the Board of Education, and all were in charge of a Superintendent who was fully trained and certificated. Lady Astor generously provided the salaries of these teachers during the first year of their service.

The Pilgrim Trust and the National Council of Social Service gave grants towards the initial cost of the buildings, which were in many cases put up by the unemployed men. Much of the service given in the kitchen and nursery was voluntary.

Mrs. Wintringham's Report

Mrs. Wintringham, the Vice-Chairman of the Association, paid visits to all the Emergency Schools and reported most favourably on the work that had been accomplished. Many of the children when admitted to the Nurseries had verminous heads, sore eyes, running ears, and boils as a result of poverty, depression, and neglect. These conditions cleared up quickly after a few months in the Nursery School, and there was a marked improvement in the general physique, bearing and outlook of the children.

The Pressing Claim of the Depressed Areas

In spite of the publication of Circular 1444 removing the ban on the building of new Nursery Schools, it is to be hoped that the work of the

Emergency Open-air Nursery School Association will continue. The debilitated children of the poorest areas have surely a first claim on our sympathy, and provision should be made for them before we consider the claims of their more



FIG. 23

Margaret McMillan - Prophet and Pioneer

fortunate brothers and sisters. This provision must be made before it is too late.

The Inadequacy of Present Nursery School Accommodation

There were 173,612 children under the age of five in our public elementary schools in 1953. Of these 22,454 are only three years of age. The Nursery School is recognized as the foundation of our national system of education, and yet there is provision made in these schools for only 22,116 children.

The Future

The need is urgent. Many of us feel very strongly that our new Nursery Schools should

provide accommodation for children up to the age of seven years—that Nursery Infant Schools should be established on the lines suggested by the supporters of the Ten-year Plan.

Great educationists of all ages are agreed that there should be no definite break in a child's life until he reaches the age of seven.

Listen to the words of Margaret McMillan, that great prophet and pioneer whose watchword was "Educate every child as if he were

your own." "We need thousands of open-air Nursery Schools for our children, and thousands of child gardeners must be educated to care for them. And when at last they come to the Elementary Schools the country must be able to say: These are my jewels, educated on human lines until they are seven years of age. The voice of the wise Jesuit will then echo back reassuringly: 'Give me a child until he is seven and then do with him as you will'."

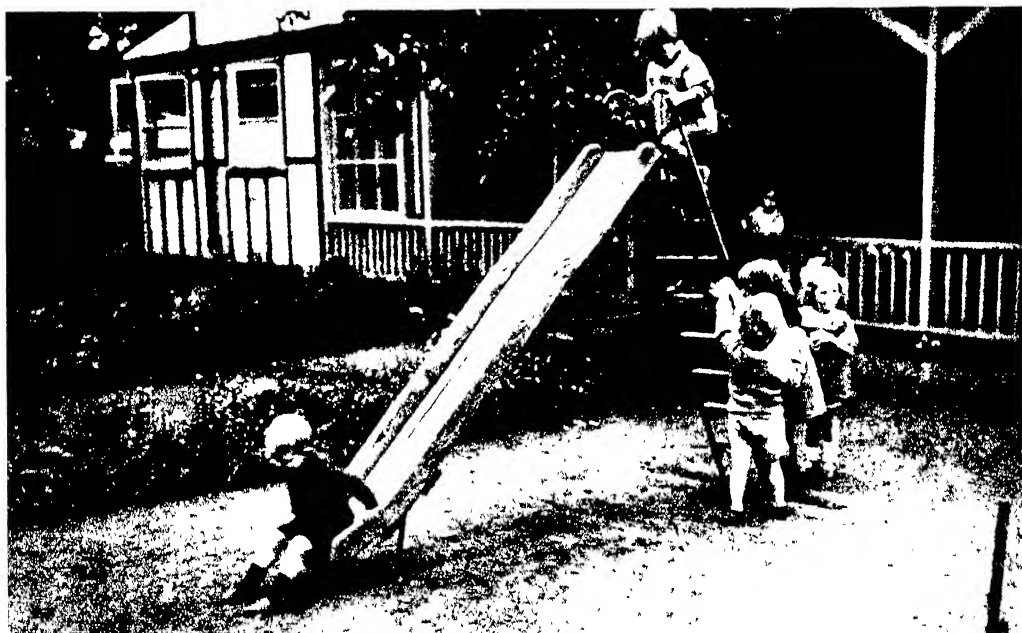


FIG. 24

Healthy and Happy Exercise

THE NURSERY CLASS, THE TEACHER AND HER WORK

*But come, you must put your thoughts once
more to this season of sowing . . .*

T. S. ELIOT, *The Rock*

*Every child comes with the message that
God is not yet discouraged of Man.*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

IN the following pages, it will be found that frequent use is made of the words "opportunity" and "unobtrusive," for about these two words could well be built a complete exposition of all that is required of the teacher of a nursery class. She must provide opportunity for children to develop according to their abilities, and she must seize every opportunity to learn to know better the children in her care. She must always work unobtrusively; the nursery class is the *children's* domain, and the teacher is there principally to guide and encourage them to educate themselves through play. Opportunity for children to play with toys of their own choice and to play with them for long uninterrupted periods, is fundamental to the building of character and the development of personality. Children's desire to play is instinctive and any restriction placed upon this natural desire can be very harmful.

Why is play so important? Through play, the very young child discovers *himself*, for his play begins in his cot when he first feels the various parts of his body, examines his hands and toes, and tries to grip and hold. When he learns to gurgle, then to shout and bang spoons, his sense of power begins to quicken. A little later his insatiable curiosity urges him to investigate everything within his reach, to experiment with it, to learn for himself something of its possibilities and limitations. When he is sufficiently developed to be able to enter a nursery class, he begins to re-live his own experiences in his play and thus solves very many of his own problems. As the aim of all education should be the building of character, the teacher, as an educationist,

should provide means for the development of physical, social, and intellectual characteristics. Thus, she will realize that in spontaneous concentrated play, either solitary or shared, children can achieve self-discipline as well as freedom of the spirit. Through effort and a determination to succeed, whether in the careful placing of a pile of bricks one upon another, or the cleaning of tarnished spoons until they shine, or the completion of a small model on the woodwork bench, children build up for themselves standards of values which make important contributions towards the enjoyment of satisfying lives in later years.

Without such opportunity for early self-expression, children may have to struggle through later childhood and adolescence mentally tongue-tied, without judgment or decision, and under constant strain. Free and uninterrupted play is the only means by which children can learn to concentrate and to gain a true estimate of their own abilities. Since play is so important to the child, the good nursery-class teacher, when children are engrossed in play, will always respect them sufficiently never to call them away to do some other task which could as well be done at another time. Even when play may appear to an onlooker to be aimless it may be for the children a matter of engrossing interest. For example, some years ago three small boys were playing in a corner with a rocking horse, and from this corner came neighs and snortings and grunts which threatened to distract all the other children in the room. When it was explained to the boys that *their* noise was causing a disturbance they

protested that they were making no noise. It all came from the horse, who was having his tonsils taken out! Again, in another school, a little girl was seen to be covering an undressed doll with dots, made with a coloured pencil. It was suggested to her that the pencil could be

put out. Such periods of inactivity or of apparently purposeless play have their value, which must not be overlooked.

With the knowledge that satisfying play requires simple toys by means of which children can develop ingenuity and resourcefulness,



FIG. 1

A Sense of Security and Confidence in Adults

much better used in drawing on paper, but she explained that would *not* suit the case, for the doll was sickening for measles!

The teacher must recognize, also, that children have their own ways by which to rest and refresh themselves after periods of purposeful play. They may do this by watching other children at their play, or by choosing an occupation which requires no effort or a completely different effort from that which they have just

teachers will not be tempted to provide elaborate toys which appeal only to adults or which will make a show on the playroom shelf. Teachers will realize, also, the satisfaction to be had from play in the kitchen, as well as that of the playroom or garden. The shelling of peas, "topping-and-tailing" gooseberries, cleaning silver, washing mugs and spoons, all these have an educative value, for in helping adults with such tasks children's confidence in their elders quickly

deepens. When doing such things, children do not think of adults as superior beings, but as persons with whom they can work in partnership, side by side, both working to achieve the same end.

Again, the teacher must recognize that although children reveal themselves both in what they say and what they do, what is *done* is more truly indicative of their real feelings. Therefore, her observation of children at play must be exact, while allowing them real freedom, she must not leave them without necessary guidance. Praise and blame must be objective, praising what has been done, not the doer. For instance, "That is a fine aeroplane you've made," not "You are a clever boy, to make such a fine aeroplane!"

Outmoded ideas portrayed the teacher as one who moulded the child as a potter moulds clay, or as one who was given an open page in which to write the child's future. To-day, the teacher can be likened to a gardener who has placed in his care a collection of rare seedlings, for which he has to supply all that is necessary for them to develop *in their own way*.

For children's natural development, play is essential, and also essential are security, affection, good health, and real freedom. Without these, the complete development of body, mind, and spirit cannot be achieved, and because she must supply all these the task of the nursery-class teacher is held by many to be among the most exacting in the profession. It is exacting, but most rewarding.

Physical and Spiritual Growth

To guard children's physical growth, the teacher must have a knowledge of their bodily needs, their diet, their need of sleep, the need to train them in habits of hygiene and to encourage the use of correct clothing. She must be able to recognize the symptoms of childhood illnesses, to render first-aid, and to advise parents how to obtain skilled help in any emergency of sickness or accident.

To promote the development of the mind, she should provide an environment rich in opportunity to explore and experiment, where children may gain manipulative skill and be given

the necessary stimuli to awaken in them any latent interest in music and movement, and in creative art.

In considering means by which to promote children's spiritual development, it is well to remember that there is no record in the Gospels that Christ ever *taught* children. Instead, He



FIG. 2
Mental Development — Concentration

told His hearers to become as little children, to be born again. This, surely, tells us that adults should carry unspoiled from their childhood a sense of wonder and awe, a ready trust of other people, and what has been called "gallant and high-hearted happiness." To this end, formal religious instruction will not help children of nursery years. Everything of beauty which they can understand, flowers and trees and birds, beauty of music and movement and colour,

beauty in form and pattern, all these help to teach them that there is design and order in the universe. An environment which offers all readily comprehended evidences of creative love must be provided, but this environment needs to be quickened by the teacher and by all the adults who serve the children's needs. By adults' never-failing example of love, patience, good-humour and tolerance will the children best learn Christian virtue.

Instruction should be confined to the answering of questions - questions which will flow very readily when children realize that *any* question can be put to the teacher. In answering these questions, all trace of sentimentality should be avoided. For example, most children first hear of Christ as the baby who was born on Christmas Day, a story which is all too easily sentimentalized. If respect for Christian teaching is to be instilled, so that in later years they will not think of Christ as a namby-pamby figure (a common belief among adolescents) it must be made clear to the children that Christ grew, as they grow, that He was taught lessons such as they must learn, that He grew up and became a carpenter and the best and wisest man the world has known. If a teacher feels herself veering towards sentimentality, let her remember Christ not as the "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild" of the old prayer, but as the reformer who plaited Himself a whip of cords and drove the money-changers and hucksters out of the Temple.

Because her work is to observe and to guide children, not to instruct them, the nursery-class teacher's part in the life of the class may appear to a casual visitor to be completely passive. Of all her abilities, the most difficult to acquire is that of being able so to efface herself so that children are encouraged to do for themselves all that they are able to do. The skilled teacher should be so sensitive to children's every need that she will know when to offer help and when to withhold it so that children may, through overcoming temporary difficulties, win a sense of real achievement. The teacher must thus, at all times, encourage self-help and self-discipline, while remembering that it is her duty to see that all rules of safety and health are obeyed. She should make only the minimum number of rules,

but rules which are made should be obeyed without question. Children are quick to appreciate the justice of this demand upon them when they have learned from experience that the teacher will not make rules only to impose her authority.

The teacher's voice should always be quiet, although at times it may be necessary to put into it that firmness by which children will understand that she means exactly what she says. It is well to note, here, that children's obedience will never be *freely* given to any adult who fails to keep any promise, however trivial, which has been made to them.

Because she respects them as individuals, a good teacher will always find it easy to apologize to children, when it may be necessary, just as she would apologize to adults in similar circumstances. Children will quickly accept as their own whatever standards of behaviour they observe the teacher to follow. Again, the good teacher should know that while, to be happy, children must be free, they must also be secure, and only their realization that the teacher will always assure their safety and well-being can make children's freedom joyous, not burdensome. Children must receive adult encouragement if they are to grow up with a spirit of adventure and without fear, so adults should never laugh at a child because he is afraid, neither should they ignore nor decry his fear. Instead, the adults with whom he is in daily contact should know him so intimately that he will discuss with them any childish fears and imaginings, to secure their help in overcoming them. The teacher should answer all questions put to her, if she is able, and when she is unable to answer she should be sufficiently humble to be able to say so without fear of "losing face."

The teacher's sense of humour should embrace an appreciation of children's sense of fun: she should be quick to laugh with them, but she will never laugh *at* them. When every other measure fails the only form of punishment known to nursery children should be exclusion from the class, but this will not include exclusion from all occupation. The teacher will accept as an axiom that *nothing* done for children is menial: her treatment will be consistent, her

sympathy never-failing. She will be patient, yet not one to be imposed upon.

Teachers should always remember that alert children are also very observant, so care should be taken to ensure that the teachers' clothes are always neat, attractive and colourful. For the same reason, a teacher's movements should be always quiet and her actions well-controlled. When she begins her work with the children, she should put away from her thoughts all personal cares and restlessness, for young children are quick to react to an adult's pre-occupation.

It should be held by every teacher to be an important part of her duties to guide her untrained helpers towards an understanding of children's needs and abilities. There must be between teachers and helpers complete co-operation and mutual respect, for without these the children in their care will feel as insecure as they would in a home where there was disharmony between the parents. Since she must work in closest contact with nursery girl-helpers and students, the teacher must have a real understanding of the special difficulties and needs of adolescence, so that she will recognize the limits of adolescents' physical strength and endurance. In this, as in everything concerning the health of the nursery class, the teacher should readily seek and accept the guidance of the school nurse. It should also be the teacher's concern to interest herself in the further education of the junior members of her staff, to help them in their choice of books and recreations and to encourage their interest in hobbies, so that their widening interests will, in turn, widen the interests which can be opened to the children.

It is very necessary to win for the nursery class the interest and help of the school cook, the domestics, and such people as the handyman and the school-keeper. A good teacher will find every day some means by which to do this, if she will point out to them the results of work which they have done. A cook who takes an intense interest in the children's reception of dishes which she prepares, and the manner in which they are served and whose interest prompts her to discuss individual weight cards with the school nurse, is a most valuable asset to any school. A domestic who is brought to

look upon her work as an essential part of the health precautions, which must be done thoroughly, is an ally to be encouraged, and the school-keeper who readily undertakes small repairs to toys and equipment is another whose help can forward the work of the nursery class.

Neighbours whose gardens overlook the school, and the tradespeople who supply its needs, are others whose interest and co-operation are most valuable, and from close association with the staffs of secondary schools both under-fives and senior boys and girls will benefit. Boys' interest can be stimulated in mending old toys and making new ones, older girls who can be brought to help with some of the school needlework, e.g. making aprons, embroidering motifs, sewing name-tapes, can gain a great deal from their visits to the nursery class. Most important, of course, is the interest and co-operation of the children's parents, and the teacher should be a leading spirit in securing and always maintaining *their* special part in the life of the school.

The aim of both parents and teachers should be the complete development of the individual child. Their task is to help to fit children to take their place in the community, and to be useful members of it, without in so doing robbing them of the fun and laughter of childhood. Sometimes, parents consider that teachers are using the wrong methods, and, sometimes, teachers claim that parents undermine at home the rules which they try to establish at school. Only free and frank discussion of these differing points of view can prevent an impasse which must retard the work of the school and harm the children.

Every opportunity for discussions with the parents should therefore be valued by the nursery-class teacher. Efforts should be made to meet the parents informally in their own homes, and the parents should be made to feel that they are always welcome at the school. The good teacher should be the complement of the parents and, unlike average parents, she should have a wide knowledge of children in general, for every child she meets should teach her something new about *all* children. The children of the nursery class will be quick to sense a close understanding between their parents, the school's Head Mistress and the

teacher, and will themselves encourage the parents' co-operation by talking freely at home of all that goes on in the class. Contrariwise, it must damage the position of both in the children's estimation if either teachers or parents criticise each other, either directly or indirectly, in the hearing of the children.

In addition to an exchange of visits between school and the homes, a parents' club is a most valuable means by which to ensure that all the adults who control the children's lives shall work to one end. Such a club needs no elaborate organization; it should meet regularly and interest in it can best be maintained if its meetings are alternate social evenings and lectures or discussions. The officers of the club should be parents, who will plan the programme of activities, and the teacher can best help by being responsible for the selection of specialists to talk to the parents upon the topics which they choose. These can range far afield, matters of general interest, the elements of child psychology, diet, family relations, teaching methods, first-aid, but all should be related to the adults' common aim, the complete development of the children. After the talks, free discussion should always be encouraged, and it will be found that these discussions often teach the hearers as much or more, than did the lecture. Almost always, some of the parents will be found ready, then, to discuss their own difficulties and ideas, sometimes with the staff, sometimes among themselves.

Parents' visits to the nursery class have their own special value in securing consistent treatment for the children. For example, teachers' efforts to make children self-reliant are wasted if, at home, the children receive too much petting and are waited upon, or if children who are accepted and respected for their own merits at school are ignored at home as being "only babies." When they see their children at school, many parents will resolve to set at home the standards which are accepted so happily by the children of the nursery class, and thereby the teacher's efforts to develop children's self-confidence and initiative will be strengthened.

In three matters of great importance, co-operation between the nursery class and the home can bring quick and important benefits to

the children; diet, discipline, and the answering of questions. Feeding problems should be very rare in the nursery class and, unless they have some foundation in physical irregularity, they should be short-lived. As opportunity offers, it should be impressed upon the parents whose own standards are suspect that children's meals should be carefully cooked and daintily served, and that some unobtrusive propaganda can make most children welcome dishes which they should eat, but which they sometimes find unattractive. Thus, tripe can be camouflaged as some attractive mystery by the use of a little cochineal, and fish served in very small portions, baked in breadcrumbs, to look like sausages. Since it is essential that children shall be treated with consistency, parents and teachers should have common standards in matters of discipline. The common standard can best be agreed by demonstrating to the parents, during their visits to the school, that they can best forward the children's development by allowing them, at home, the same measure of happy freedom with security. Elsewhere in this section, teachers are reminded that all questions should be answered frankly (or, if they cannot be answered, the children should be given a reason why they cannot know the answer). Parents should be encouraged to co-operate to the full in this matter. It should be pointed out to them that only by such means can children be encouraged to be frank, and that by such means children can add to their general knowledge without effort.

Planning a Nursery Class

Every proposal to open a Nursery Class needs a great deal of careful thought and planning by all who are to be connected with it. Of prime importance is full and frank discussion between the Head Teacher of the school, the Nursery-class Teacher, and the Heads of any other departments which may be using the same building. When plans are nearing maturity, there should be similar discussions with the parents of the children who are to make up the class. Parents are named last only because it is probably better not to consult with them until the teachers are agreed among themselves, but in the children's lives parents rank first and no

nursery class can be really successful without their ready and complete co-operation.

Staff

In charge of the class, under the general supervision of the Head Mistress, should be a teacher fully trained in nursery-school method, aided by a nursery assistant who should be, if possible, one who has had a Nursery Nurse's or similar training. Failing this, the assistant should be sufficiently mature to be able to accept responsibility.

At least one nursery student (i.e. one studying for the Nursery Nurse's Diploma) or a nursery girl-helper is also necessary to the full-time staff, and all should be ready to co-operate to the full with the visiting school Nurse. Hers is the first responsibility for the diagnosis and treatment of minor ailments, for the children's general health, and for such things as dressings and bandages. The nurse will also keep exact and complete records of children's height, weight, etc., and attend with these at the periodical medical inspections.

Size of Class

This will naturally depend, to a large extent, upon the size of the available rooms, but ideally the number in the care of any one teacher and her helpers should never exceed 30. The official age-range for Nursery Classes is from three years to five. Some children of two are sufficiently sturdy and independent to take their places happily in a group, but many more are overwhelmed and over-stimulated, and so are far better at home.

Admission of Children

The maximum number of children who are to make up the class should not be admitted immediately it is opened. When all is ready, not more than ten children should first be enrolled. When these have learned what is to be their new routine—say, after a week—the remainder can follow at the rate of one every day until the number is complete. By this means, what is to become the “tradition” of the class can quickly be established, and there will

be little risk that the class will make a halting start such as can happen if 30 young children, all strangers to each other, are suddenly brought together in the care of adults who also are strangers to them.

When individual children are admitted—either while the strength of the class is being built up or later, when vacancies occur—it is advisable to ask the child's mother to bring him to the school at least once beforehand. Then, the teacher can obtain all the details necessary for the school records and the child can explore the play-rooms and garden so that his new surroundings will not be completely strange to him when he comes as a pupil. It will sometimes happen that diffident children are reluctant to stay in the class when they see their mothers leave. In such cases, it should be arranged that the mothers stay for a time, each day, steadily shortening the period for which they stay until the child feels secure. In such cases, also, it should be arranged that the child shall leave early, so that there shall not arise in his mind any fear that he has been forgotten.

Accommodation

Next comes material provision. Ideally, every nursery class should have, within the confines of the primary school premises, its own building. This should be of the bungalow type, such as is used by most nursery schools. It is *essential*, however, that the class shall have two large light rooms, sufficient to allow of free movement by all the children when the weather gives them no choice between indoor and outdoor play. These rooms should face South, and at least one should give immediate access to the playground. Each should have cross-ventilation, and the artificial lighting should be satisfactory for the late afternoons of winter days. The floor of the room where the midday meal is to be served should be covered with linoleum if its permanent surface will not permit of frequent washing. Each room should be decorated in light, pleasant shades and one should have an open fireplace in place of or in addition to the central heating. The need for two rooms is an essential, because it is necessary to provide space both for vigorous play and

quiet, and to give room for the adequate spacing of rest beds. To facilitate supervision of rest and play the rooms should be inter-communicating.

Isolation Room

Where the Nursery Class is a separate unit it is necessary in the interests of the class to provide a small room where a child who is obviously not well can be kept from the other children until his mother arrives. Where the Nursery Class is

not be considered. The outdoor play space should include not only an area with a permanent surface of flags or asphalt, but it should have also a lawn or, at least, a grassy patch; trees, or other means of giving shade in high summer, and flower-beds or flower-boxes which the children can tend, as well as others carefully cultivated by adults. Many schools in provincial towns can give their nursery classes these conditions, but in crowded cities and towns such provision is often impossible. The reserved



FIG. 3

Cloakroom Arrangements for the Tinies

in a wing of the main building the school medical room can provide this safeguard.

Outdoor Play Space

It is essential that all young children, more especially those of nursery years, spend most of the day in the open air, as they do in all good nursery schools. If a section of the playground cannot be reserved for them, so that their activities are not restricted by the play-time or games periods of older children from the same building, the provision of a nursery-class *should*

playground should be immediately outside the playroom, so that the children can change their occupations or reach the toilet annexe with ease. It is an advantage if this reserved playground is enclosed by a simple fence, so that the older children can take an interest in the activities of the nursery group without unduly disturbing it.

Cloakroom

It is necessary to have a small room, leading out of the playroom or, failing this, within easy reach of it, for the storage of outdoor shoes and

clothes. This room should be heated, so that clothes can be dried in wet weather. Pegs should be six inches apart and every peg should be given its own distinguishing mark to encourage children's self-reliance. Below the pegs should be a low seat for the children's use, and under this individual lockers for storing Wellingtons.

Washing Annexe

This also should be readily accessible and it should be large enough to allow of an adequate number of fixed and/or portable washing basins.¹ It should be sufficiently large to allow of independent action in self-help. It is useless to have a room large enough to accommodate the required equipment unless it is also large enough for children to move freely about it when filling and emptying bowls, etc. There should be a sufficient number of bowls to prevent a long pause between the time when the first children wash and the time for serving dinner. If constant hot water is not laid on at the washing basins, a water-heater should be installed and small enamel jugs kept within easy reach, to allow the children to fill their own bowls. (The jugs, of course, should be filled from the heater by an adult.) Individual towels and face-cloths, hung on separate hooks, must be well-spaced (six inches apart is a minimum) and they should be placed at a height suited to the children. Portable stands, on which towels and flannels can be carried into the open air to be dried and aired, are to be preferred to hooks on the walls of the room. Each towel and flannel should be given the same distinctive mark as that used in the cloak-room for hat-pegs. Silhouettes of familiar objects are best used for marking pegs, provided that they are drawn in reasonably correct proportions. For example, no child should see, filling the space for his own symbol a mouse, while the next peg has—in the same space—a horse! For adults' guidance, and to familiarize the child with its appearance in print, the child's name also should appear below the symbol. There is a very great difference between explaining to a child that he will find a mouse over his name and saying, "You are a mouse!" Individual combs, also

clearly marked, should be hung on hooks beside the towels. Holes can be pierced in combs with a heated skewer, and a key-ring inserted. Combs thus hung are more readily available and are more easily kept cleaner than they can be when comb-bags are used.

A set of low shelves should be available, on which to set out individual mugs (also marked) and, if teeth-cleaning is done in the school, tooth-brushes. Brushes should not be kept in the mugs, but should be placed in holes drilled for that purpose beside each mug. The washing annexe should have long mirrors, fixed at children's eye-level, and it should be fitted with a suitable boiler, for the boiling of flannels, or a suitable gas-ring placed well out of children's reach, and suitably protected.

Lavatories

It will be readily understood by all who have any knowledge of the physical and emotional characteristics of very young children that it is advisable to have an adequate number of indoor lavatories of the right size.¹ Only if it is impossible to supply these, two indoor lavatories and a sufficient number of outdoor ones (reserved for the older children in the class) are the minimum substitute. When the nursery class has been established, if it is conducted aright, there should be no periodical stampede to the lavatories. If the children's interests in the play-room are correctly planned, it will be found that they will leave their occupations, from time to time, only as occasion requires. All lavatories should have half-doors, so that unobtrusive supervision can be maintained without invading the children's privacy. The lavatory cisterns should be fitted with chains long enough to be within the children's reach.

Beds

These should have tubular metal frames, covered with strong canvas, and be designed to fold. They should be light enough to be carried by two children, and each should be supplied with a detachable linen sheet, held at the corners with tapes. To each bed should be

¹ See Ministry of Education's Regulations

¹ See Ministry of Education's Regulations

allotted a blanket large enough to be rolled around the child using it. Beds and blankets should carry the child's symbol, that on the blanket can be embroidered and that on the bed be drawn on a ply-wood disc or a strong linen luggage-label. For emergencies there should be available spare beds, sheets and blankets.

Bed and Toy Storage

Where there are ordinary store-rooms leading out of the playrooms, by the removal of lower shelves these can be easily adapted for the storage of stretcher-beds. Where this room is not available, a long wide shelf with a hanging curtain provides space for both beds and toys. This plan, however, has disadvantages, in that valuable floor-space is used, the children find it difficult to put away their own beds, and dust can accumulate on the beds and blankets. The ideal provision for bed storage is a specially made light trolley, so that every bed has its own compartment. It saves a great deal of trouble when beds are moved from store to playroom or garden.

Equipment of Nursery Class Rooms

When the position, size, ventilation, and lighting of the playrooms are held to be satisfactory, they must be equipped in such a way that the children can safely live their own lives without undue interference or help from the staff. Where there is an open fire, a fireguard which can be moved only by an adult *must* be provided. Tables and chairs, in attractive colours, should be light enough to be carried by the children without strain and should be of various sizes to allow comfort and correct posture to children of different builds. Cupboards should be low and should have shelves wide enough to ensure that toys can be set out attractively and yet be easily reached by children of different heights. A small cupboard or a separate set of low shelves is needed for the satisfactory storage of material for domestic play; such things as small brooms, dustpans, dusters, etc.

A cupboard which can be locked gives the teacher the necessary means of keeping beyond the children's reach any material which she

considers they are not yet ready to use, or which it is safe for them to use only when adequate supervision is assured. Long low wall-boards, to allow of good arm-movement with chalks, are a valuable addition. Picture-rails should be low, so that all pictures can be hung on the children's eye-level. Pictures should be clear and full of interest, and so framed that they can be changed at intervals. There should be low shelves to hold plants, vases of flowers, aquaria, etc. A small number of washable mats is necessary for the use of children who wish to set out material on the floor.

A piano and if possible a portable gramophone are necessary parts of the equipment. Simple screens, made from clothes-horses, give the conventional playroom corners where children can take some rest which instinct tells them is necessary. They may do this either by spending a short time in solitary play, or by joining a small group to experience all that is to be learned from group play.

Meals

For the proper service of meals, the following should be provided—

- 1 Sets of attractive table-cloths (if these are not available and such material as table-oilcloth has to be used, this should be made more pleasing by binding its edges with coloured braid or by painting pictures on it with waterproof paint) Dinner-mats are an alternative means of adding colour and decoration
- 2 Sets of plates, allowing two for each child, and some spare ones for emergencies
- 3 A set of mugs, and necessary spares. Plates and mugs, if not made of china, should be of a material which can be thoroughly cleaned and, if necessary, boiled
- 4 Spoons, small knives and forks of a lightweight pattern
- 5 A large trolley, with lined shelves.

Equipment of Playground and Garden

The outdoor play space is the real setting of children of nursery years, and every care should be taken to provide sufficient planned and improvised material to ensure that there is full scope for the children to use up some of their boundless energy, to develop their muscles and

their skill, and to learn control. Such equipment should include—

1. A climbing-frame, a chute and a see-saw, or one of the branded sets of equipment which includes all of these.

2. A wall-ladder, with rungs six inches apart, to make children fearless and footsure. (Such a ladder can be inexpensively made with gas-barrels $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and 3 feet long.) If this ladder is made with struts at top and bottom, the children can have the added fun of climbing up one side and down the other. It is important that children should be introduced to such apparatus by an adult, and that definite instruction be given to them. The time spent in doing this will give children added confidence and will minimize the risk of accidents.

3. A sand-pit, with buckets and spades and a supply of patty-tins and wooden kitchen spoons. An elaborate pit is not necessary—it is sufficient to provide a pile of sea sand in an enclosed space, with a surrounding wide ledge to be used as seat or table. The pit must be properly drained, and it should be covered when not in use, so that it is not fouled by animals. Without water, play with sand is limited, so it is an advantage to have a tap in the garden. Failing this, metal jugs should be provided, so that the children can carry water from an indoor tap.

4. A swing and horizontal bars.

5. Apart from the conventional equipment, a supply of boxes of varying sizes and shapes (made safe with the removal of old nails and rusty strapping, and with rough patches sand-papered), old motor-car tyres, and barrels, give children opportunities to display ingenuity and inventiveness in making their own toys. Small stout boxes with lids make good substitutes for large building bricks. No outside equipment is complete without a number of roughly-hewn logs, and planks at least nine inches wide.

6. Smaller toys—wheeled toys, which should include a large proportion of carts of all descriptions, to carry loads, 'porters' trucks, tricycles, and wheelbarrows, engines, large balls, etc.

It should be a rule that the children do not add to this equipment any playroom furniture. Tables and chairs should always be used only for their conventional purposes, and should not be upturned and transformed into submarines or aeroplanes and the like. Such abuse of furniture will detract from the pride which the children should be taught to take in their playrooms.

Where there is a garden as well as a surfaced space, there can be a variety of interests. A bird-table and a dove-cote encourage keen observation, a rockery and a herbaceous border will give endless opportunity for discussion of the seasons and the laws of Nature. A hutch of rabbits, or other easily-cared for animals will teach, in a natural way, the need to care for such animals and will give the children an opportunity to learn something of

their habits and their life-story. It must be remembered that animals should not be kept unless satisfactory arrangements for their care at week-ends and during holidays can be made. Small patches of ground for hard digging are valuable features of such a garden. A grassy mound will suggest all kinds of spontaneous play. If the garden is only a small one, children



FIG. 4

Outdoor Physical Activity

can be given the experience of wandering, if imagination is used in planting low hedges and bushes, with winding paths among them. A simple summer-house will also help children to feel that they are able to leave for a while the "madding crowd."

The less fortunate nursery class, which has no garden, need not be deprived of colour and beauty. A rockery which can be a splash of colour during many months of the year, can be built on concrete. Window-boxes and garden

tubs are other means by which to satisfy the need for beauty, and they can supply small flowers for the table-vases. It is unnatural for children of nursery age to be interested in gardening for its own sake; they have not yet reached the stage when the gardener's patience can be expected of them, they want quick results, so it should be remembered, when stocking the boxes or tubs, that sturdy seedlings or quickly-grown seeds are best used. A small garden shed should be available for the storage of simple garden tools.

Whether the class has the use of a planned garden or only a reserved corner of a playground, it is necessary to include low benches or chairs where the children can sit and relax. It is important that outdoor space shall not be

no pool can be provided, the children can enjoy most of the pleasures of this kind of water-play in one of the well-known inflated pools, in a second-hand rubber dinghy, or even from an ordinary garden hose. If a pool or any other contained water is used by the children it is

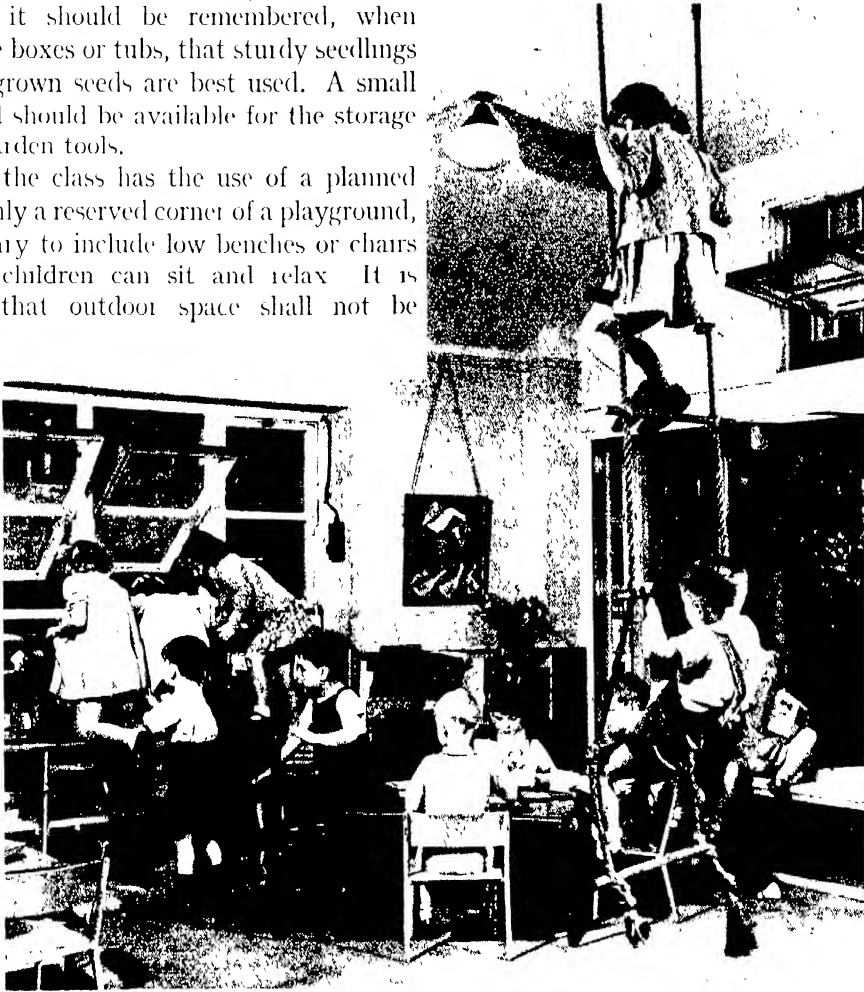


FIG. 5

Indoor Physical Activity

thought of only in terms of vigorous, noisy play; it should be recognized that children will need physical rest and that mental repose which leads adults to meditation—perhaps, who knows (?) children also meditate.

If available space permits of its construction well away from any highway, when the water will quickly become very dirty, a shallow paddling pool is a delightful asset to any class. If

essential to see that it is frequently drained and thoroughly cleaned.

Indoor Play Equipment

It must be clearly understood that any play equipment described as "indoor" is not of necessity to be used only in the playroom. When tables and chairs are set out in the open air—as they should be whenever weather permits—much

of the indoor material can be carried out by the children, just as from the smaller outdoor equipment some runabout toys should be carried into the second playroom when the weather will not permit of their being used out-of-doors.

puzzles, ring-pyramids, a farm-yard and a village set. All have their place and their own especial interest. When stocking these shelves, teachers need not feel frustrated if their funds are limited, for toys which can be improvised from



FIG. 6

Improvised Play Material

The low shelves in the playroom should make available a large variety of toys, many of which will be self-correcting, such as posting-boxes which invite the child to "post" in a box, through holes of various shapes, small pieces of wood cut into the same shapes, cylinders of various sizes to be fitted into holes of the same diameter, geometrical shapes and jig-saw puzzles. All these develop discrimination and concentration. There must be toys to increase manipulative skill, such as the branded sets of inter-locking bricks and bricks which can be pegged together in various ways, mosaics and peg-boards to develop creative ability, with brightly-coloured trays of insets, large wooden

things which are in everyday use and from waste material—can give children the same exercises and, very often, more pleasure. For instance, an assortment of empty toothpaste tubes, with their caps, or a quantity of assorted large nuts and bolts, present to the child the same problem to solve and increase manipulative skill as successfully as many expensive toys. Hammer-pegs and similar toys which develop manual control are very popular among children of all ages and are excellent means of correcting a "power-urge." For the contemplative child, the threading of large brightly-coloured wooden beads can hold all the attractions which knitting offers many adults.

Small toys such as these are very useful in that they widen the variety of occupations from which children can choose, and they can be used for solitary quiet play when a child feels a need of it, but they should be thought of as the refinements of equipment. It is far more important that the basic material, i.e. sand,



FIG. 7
Modelling in Clay

water, clay and paint, shall be available. A zinc-lined tray is necessary for really enjoyable and satisfactory play with sand. A zinc bath, sufficiently large to allow several children to stand about it, is a useful receptacle for water if one of the specially-designed tanks is not to be had. Empty tins, rubber tubing, corks, a small colander and funnels should be provided, so that children can experiment. It is advisable to place the bath on a groundsheet. Small waterproof aprons, which the children can themselves put on should also be available; smaller

bowls of water and a rubbing-board, for the washing of dolls' clothes, and pipes for bubble-blowing, provide a different type of water-play. Bubble-pipes are among the toys which should be accessible to the children only when adequate supervision can be assured, to ensure that the children do not exchange them. After use, the pipes should be thoroughly washed and disinfected.

Clay must be kept in a special bin, covered with a damp cloth, and it should be mixed to the correct consistency before being given to the children. Tables on which clay is to be used should be covered with oilcloth, and for use with the clay there should be small boards and rolling-pins, flat pieces of wood, and short sticks.

Painting

Two-sided painting easels, long-handled brushes which allow of good arm movement, and a variety of colours in mixed powder-paint, are necessary. Large pieces of paper, which can be fastened to the easel with large paper-clips or clothes-pegs, must be used. It is useful to provide for the children large sheets of paper spread on the floor, at which they can kneel to do their work.

For younger children, who do not take pride in keeping and displaying their pictures, and who are more interested only in splashing colour on to the paper, sheets of newspaper will serve. For these younger children, too, old pictures which can be bought at second-hand shops, make extra painting-boards if the pictures are removed from the frames and replaced with white paper. Paint can then be applied to the glass, and afterwards removed with a damp cloth. Large discarded decorators' brushes, and a pail of water, with which children can "paint" outside walls offer other means of encouraging good arm movement as a foundation for later skill in the use of brushes.

In many nursery schools, "finger-painting" has proved to be a great success. For this, powder paint mixed to the consistency of a thick paste can be used if the specially-prepared paint is not available. The paint is applied with the finger, or with two or three fingers, to evolve concentric patterns.

Simple Tools

A workbench, with simple woodworking tools, pieces of wood of varying shapes and thickness, and a box of large flat-headed nails, is another necessary piece of equipment. This material, also, can be made available to the children only when adequate supervision is assured, and it is

A sack containing odd pieces of wood, of all sizes and shapes, should be included with this building material.

Dramatic Play

For this play, which is so much enjoyed by children of from four to five years, a screen house large enough to be shared by several



FIG. 8

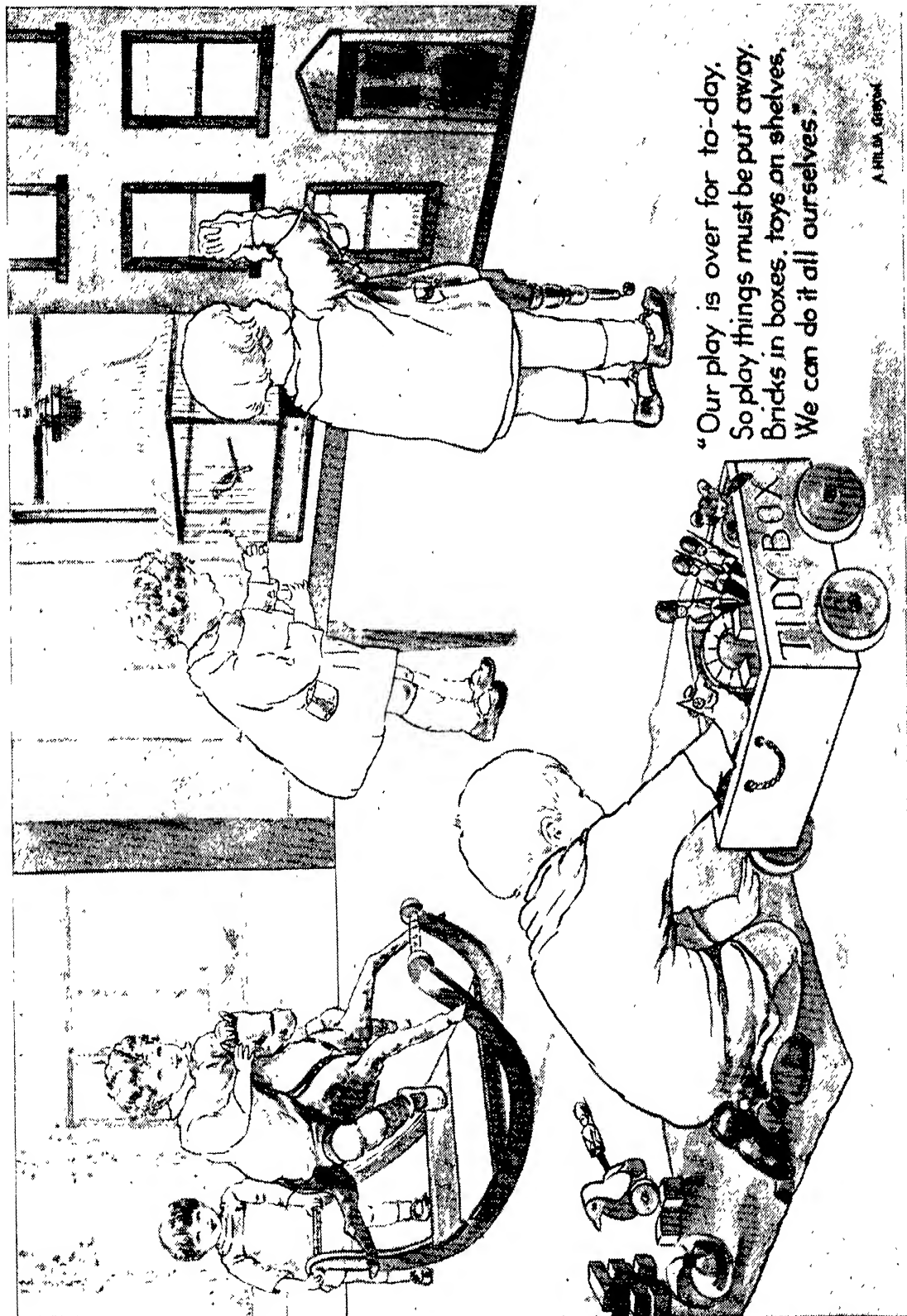
Simple Woodwork

important that from the outset the children shall be shown the correct way to hold tools and to use them.

Building Bricks

These also are essentials. Small brightly coloured bricks, for table use, have their place, but full-sized hollow bricks (or small wooden boxes of a similar size) with which children can build "houses" large enough to enter, are the most valuable, and lead to real creative effort.

children provides a setting. An improvised Wendy House can be made with large clothes-horses, covered with canvas or other material with holes cut in the sides for windows. This house should hold a small table and chairs and have its own tea-set, a washable doll, a bath, dolls' bed and bed-clothes, a toy cooking-stove, a dresser, a mangle, and an ironing-board. A toy telephone is a very popular addition. An old hand-bag, with cardboard money and most of the oddments usually carried by adults, fascinates



"Our play is over for to-day.
So play things must be put away.
Bricks in boxes, toys on shelves,
We can do it all ourselves."

A. M. L. G. G. G.

FIG. 9
Care of Live Things—Tidiness—Cleanliness

children of nursery age. Dolls and dolls' beds are favourite toys for all younger children. Dolls' clothes should be well made, and finished in detail, so that through absorbing play the children can become quick and deft in manipulating buttons, hooks and eyes, and press-fasteners, and so become completely self-reliant in their own dressing and undressing. Dolls' beds need be of only the simplest design. Tomato-boxes covered with a gay material make attractive beds and cradles. A simple shop, with scales and with such things as sawdust, dried beans, etc., for weighing, and with cardboard money for the children who are ready to use it, is another means by which to encourage group play.

Book Corner

A book corner, which also can be enclosed with a simple screen such as a covered clothes-horse, can be added if space allows. Each book should be kept in its own pocket on the inner side of the screen, and children should be taught to take books from these pockets only when their hands are reasonably clean. If necessary, they must wash their hands before going into the book corner. It should be the rule, also, that every book is returned to its own pocket after use. Books must have large well-drawn pictures with a positive interest, they must not sentimentalize or distort their subjects; for example, they should not show any dressed-up animal. It is advisable to set out only a small number of books at a time, changing them at intervals.

Good serviceable picture-books for the younger children can be made from squares of bookbinders' linen, or old linen blinds, stitched together. One or two large pictures pasted in each page make better books than those which have a number of small illustrations.

Soft Toys

A few soft toys are useful at rest-time, especially for new children, but as a general rule children old enough to be in nursery classes take little sustained interest in soft toys. It is extremely difficult to keep such toys really clean and, if only for this reason, their number should be kept to the absolute minimum.

General Cleanliness

In all things, the standard of cleanliness must be superlative. Face-flannels must be boiled daily and combs must be scrubbed daily except where individual combs need more frequent attention. Towels, table-cloths and blankets must always be scrupulously clean, and floor-cloths, lavatory-cloths, and any other material which can by any means carry infection must be strictly watched. Cloths for different uses must be clearly marked: for example, lavatory-cloths, floor-cloths, and cloths for wiping tables should be immediately distinguishable. In the interests of hygiene, all lavatory-cloths must be boiled every day in a special container kept only for this purpose. This container also should be clearly marked, to denote its use. Children can be trained to assist the staff in keeping strictly to these standards if the cloths are given loops of different colours as a means of identification. For example, conspicuous red loops for floor-cloths, bright green loops for lavatory-cloths, yellow loops for cloths reserved for wiping tables and so on. These precautions can be maintained still more easily if materials of completely different patterns are used. Individual blankets may, from time to time, need special attention, but they should be washed as a matter of course at the end of each term. The sheets which cover the canvas of stretcher-beds should be changed once a week. Floors of all rooms should be swept and washed daily, and at this time care must be taken to ensure that the rest beds are well covered to minimize the risk of spreading infection through dust. Open shelves must be dusted daily, and scrubbed once a week; cupboard shelves must be scrubbed weekly. The children may help in the cleaning of shelves.

Care of Play Material

There should be a small reserve of equipment of all kinds, so that if a piece is broken or shabby it can be replaced while any necessary repairs are carried out. All toys should be kept scrupulously clean, and should be painted in the bright colours which most attract children. If wooden puzzles and other toys made of plywood are varnished before they are put into

use, they are more easily kept clean. For this purpose, a good clear varnish is necessary, and it must be left long enough to set hard before the toys are used.

Sand in the pit and the sand-tray must be renewed as often as possible and should be disinfected weekly.¹

The Nature Table should be covered with attractive oilcloth which is wiped each morning. Jars for twigs and flowers should be washed and the water renewed by the children, each day.

Aquaria need to be cleaned periodically. The fish or other occupants should first be removed and put immediately into fresh water in a



FIG. 10

The Nature Corner

Every care should be taken to ensure that dolls' clothes and bed-clothes are always in good order and perfectly clean. Few things in a nursery class are more unattractive than dirty or shabby clothes of these kinds. Soft toys must be washed at least once each week.

¹ Disinfection of Sand

Materials and utensils required—

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 7 fluid oz "chloros" | } to each 10 cubic | |
| 1 oz ammonium sulphate | | yards of sand |
| 2-gallon bucket. | | |
| 2-gallon watering can. | | |

Method Fill bucket and watering-can with water, thoroughly stir into each one-half of the above quantity of chloros, using a stick for the stirring. Distribute this solution over the sand from the watering-can, refill

suitable receptacle which has been made ready beforehand. Then the water is poured away and the sand and pebbles removed. When the tank has been thoroughly cleaned, and the sand washed and drained, it can be returned to the tank. Water-weeds, fixed to stones, should then be removed from the bucket and repeat the process. The surface of the sand should then be hosed in order to dilute the ammonium sulphate solution and to allow it to penetrate.

Refill bucket and watering-can and add to each half the quantity of chloros. Distribute the contents of bucket and watering-can as before, and again hose the sand.

The sand must then be turned over, one spit deep, before the children are allowed to use it. This is a task for an adult, and is one which many school-keepers and handymen will undertake.

be pressed into the sand and a small jar placed on the sand in the centre of the tank. Water poured slowly into this jar will overflow and run over the sand without stirring it up into a cloud. When a few inches of water have thus been poured onto the sand, the jar can be removed before the tank is filled to its normal level and the fish, etc., returned. The fish, of course, should be removed from the tank in a net: they should never be caught by hand.

All damage to books should be repaired immediately, and any book so damaged that it fails to hold the children's interest should be withdrawn.

Wheels lost from toys should be replaced as quickly as possible, if possible with the children's help, and if any part of a toy is lost the children should be taught to look for it, until it is found. This is an essential part of their training.

Dusters, dustpans, brushes, and everything connected with the children's domestic play, must be washed regularly, the children again helping.

A Day in a Nursery Class

The nursery class should not have a set daily programme, certain events of the day, such as the serving of morning milk, the midday meal, and afternoon rest, should have fixed times and thus divide the day into stages, but there should be elasticity in the arrangement of other activities between these times. Conditions determined by staff, accommodation and circumstances will influence these arrangements, but the outdoor and indoor environment should be sufficiently rich in opportunity that the children will be able to direct their own occupations and become absorbed in what they do. Much emphasis to-day is laid upon children's need of an outdoor life, because experience has shown that a tendency to keep children within the four walls of the playroom is the most frequent and best-founded criticism of nursery classes in general, as compared with nursery schools. On the other hand, it is well to remember that to some children the bustle of outdoor activities is in itself a distraction, and all children at times will wish to get away from it.

It should not be assumed that any child's wish to be alone is always a sign of anti-social tendencies, and even in the most favourable weather free access to the playroom must not be denied to the children. Again, many children of nursery age enjoy group play such as simple singing games, singing rhymes, moving freely to music, and listening to stories. At such times, children feel themselves to be members of a community as well as individuals, and through these

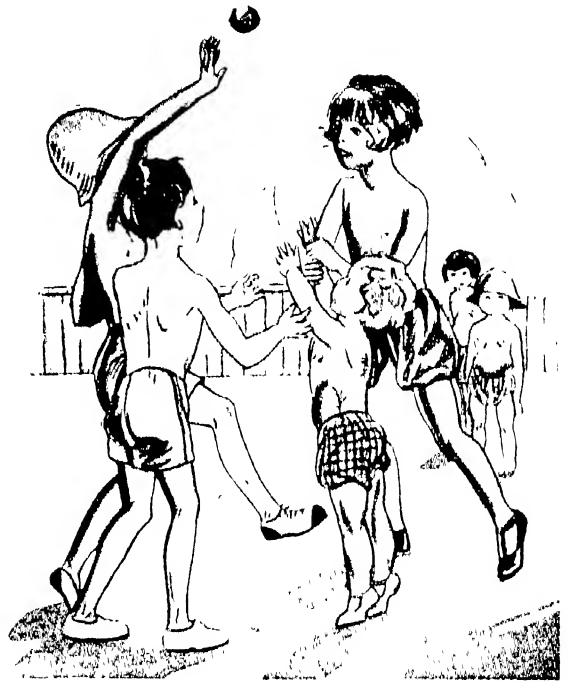


FIG 11

Sun-bathing in Playtime

activities they can develop poise and control and, unconsciously, learn to co-operate with each other. The typical day of a good nursery class, which is open from 9.30 a.m. to 4.0 p.m., could therefore follow a general plan such as that now to be described.

In Fine Weather

At 9.30 a.m. the children arrive. The Nursery Assistant should be in the playground, to supervise outdoor play, the Teacher in the cloak-room to greet mothers and children, and the Nursery Student or girl helper in the playroom.

It is a considerable help if it is arranged with the mothers that they shall encourage their children to use one of the outdoor lavatories before they enter the cloak-room.

For every child, the day should start on a personal note when the teacher greets him by name and shakes hands with him. This individual welcome gives the child an assurance of the teacher's personal interest in him, as well as giving the teacher an opportunity to discuss with the parent any difficulty concerning the child. Such discussions, of course, should never take place in the child's hearing. Care is then taken to see that the child is perfectly clean and suitably clothed, and that he is fit for school. If it is obvious that he is not well, the mother should be asked to take him home again. If the child's hands and face are not completely clean, he should be asked to wash himself. If he is not otherwise clean, the mother should be required to bath him, if there is a bath in the school. If there is no school bath, the mother should be asked to bring him back later, satisfactorily washed. Only by such methods can the physical well-being of the class as a whole be protected, and the parents are taught a useful lesson.

As each mother leaves the school, her child should be free to choose whether he will go into the garden to play with the larger wheeled toys, or to use the bigger apparatus, to water the plants, attend to pets, or to enjoy meeting his friends. Perhaps he will choose to go into the playroom, where long low tables are by now attractively set out with a number of shallow baskets containing coloured aprons, duster and polishing cloths, and saucers holding a supply of metal polish. Nearby, there will be a bowl of freshly-cut flowers, small cans of water, small empty table vases, and blunt-ended scissors. From these he can make his own choice of some task which will contribute to the attractiveness and the brightness of the playroom. One child may don a waterproof apron and proceed to wash one of the tables, or perhaps cut and arrange flowers. A patterned apron with pockets for dusters will perhaps attract another to the pleasure of polishing door-knobs, the cymbals of the percussion band, or the piano pedals. If the windows are low, some of the children may decide to clean the glass with small pieces of

chamois leather. The younger children who choose to come into the playroom will spend this time, as a rule, in dusting or sweeping, using small brushes and dustpans, seeking any dust which may have been left by the cleaner on the previous night. Washing the oilcloth on the nature table, changing water in specimen-jars, adding water to the aquarium and the feeding of the fish should be undertaken by older children, helped by the Nursery Student, who is also responsible for the dusting of any high shelves or other surfaces which are beyond the children's reach.

By ten o'clock, the last of the children should have arrived and the playroom should be orderly, gay and dainty. The teacher should now be free to help and guide the children in the use of sensory material and other toys which present a particular problem to be solved. Before the children settle to these occupations, they should be given a mug of milk, or a bottle of milk with straw. This should be done without any formal laying of tables (something in the style of adults' "elevenses") to avoid any lengthy interruption of the children's activities and to ensure that the milk, by being received reasonably early, will not lessen their appetite for their midday meal.

The doors of the low cupboards should now be open, the curtains of shelves put back, to invite children to make their own choice from toys so varied as to provide for each age and stage of development material suited to each child's ability, and designed to maintain his interest. If, by about eleven o'clock, there is any sign of restlessness among the children, such as abuse of the toys, or if their play begins to lack purpose, it is a sign that a change is needed. Until then, all the children must be free to choose whether they will remain indoors or play out of doors, so that at any time the scene may include such groups as the following.

Four-year-old boys have excitedly reached the top of the climbing-frame, others are enjoying the fun of sliding at speed down the chute. In one corner, two children are absorbed at painting-easels, applying great splashes of colour with steady strokes. A five-year-old is concentrating on setting-out on a rug on the playroom floor a set of the finely-graded Montessori

colour-spools, another is gaining skill in handling the small nuts and bolts of a manipulative toy; from the house corner comes a happy buzz as four children live a domestic life, cooking and washing and mangling, and at intervals preparing the fantastic meals which only children's imagination can devise. In the book corner, two four-year-olds are deep in books, occasionally discussing with each other the pictures which they find. Around the bath of water is a lively group of younger children, all wearing waterproof aprons, their sleeves rolled well above the elbows, pouring and emptying water from one jar to another, filling bottles through rubber tubes and vinegar funnels, lifting colanders or punctured tins to watch the water streaming through. Not far away, a three-year-old hammers the pegs of hammer-pegs with a rhythmic beat, while two five-year-olds stand at the woodwork bench, absorbed in sawing lengths of wood from which to make an aeroplane.

Sitting in a quiet corner, a four-year-old girl, with eyes tightly shut, is pairing by her sense of touch samples of fabric of different textures, in company with another child who also concentrates, with closed eyes, on a set of Montessori weight tablets. The shelf around the sand-pit is filled with puddings and cakes moulded in patty-tins, and a flag flies over a castle in the middle of the pit. Not far away, one small child mechanically threads beads while he chats to another about his mother, (his listener has been to the dressing-up box and is wearing a trailing pink dress, a large hat with feathers, and she is carrying a fibre attaché-case!) An orange box has become a motor coach, taking a load of children to the seaside. Motor-car tyres are being rolled, tricycles ridden, carts loaded. Against a wall, a house is being carefully built, while nearby a four-year-old, dressed as a nurse, is taking the temperature of a teddy bear, using a twig as a thermometer. The funboat is rocking with the weight of two three-year-olds, a plank resting between two boxes is being used as a balancing-beam, while beside it is a row of small boxes along which children step gingerly for the boxes are now stepping-stones across a stream. On the low wall which divides the playground from the

garden, a solitary child sits, now watching on one side the games being played and now, on the other, two children digging enthusiastically their own special plot of ground, beside a tent which they have temporarily left.

In summer-time children should be encouraged to discard clothes as weather grows warmer, to enjoy the benefits of sun- and air-bathing. Care must of course be taken that they do not expose themselves to the extreme heat of high summer—sun-bathing should begin as soon as the temperature is reasonably high. In very hot weather, children's heads and spines should always be covered, and for such occasions light straw hats with wide brims should be worn with bathing trunks which have wide strips held up by shoulder straps to protect chest and back.

When interest in free activities begins to flag, many of the children will be ready to join a group to exchange news, to hear a story, to sing, to play simple games, or to enjoy movement to music. This period of group activity should be short, *never* longer than half-an-hour, during which only one of the suggested occupations should be attempted.

For group discussions and the exchange of news, and for story-telling, children are best arranged in a circle, and whether they sit on chairs or on the floor, the teacher sits *with* them. A circle, while allowing each child reasonable space, has still an air of friendly informality, and helps the teacher to hold the interest of the group. It must be made clear to children who do not wish to join the group that they must not in any way disturb it. Many teachers start this period with a short Thanksgiving, an opportunity for spontaneous expression of thanks for anything, be it a toy or a meal, a new coat, or a handful of fir cones which have given the children pleasure. When the right atmosphere of quiet and repose has been reached, the teacher opens with her own expression of thanks, for example, "I would like to thank God for trees (or) flowers (or) music (or) for friends and parents" then the children in turn are invited to state their own ideas as to what should be included as subjects for thanksgiving.

When all these ideas have been recounted,

they are summed up in simple form and thanks given in a prayer such as—

“Let us give thanks for friends and home, for work and play, for hands to make, for eyes to see and lips to speak, for health and strength to do our daily work and in the end the gift of quiet sleep.”

It will very often happen that while children and teacher are thus sitting in a ring together discussions upon all sorts of topics will be opened, so that the teacher will be given opportunity for informal instruction upon a variety of subjects. New flowers in the vases will perhaps prompt a nature talk, a new pet kitten brought for the children's approval may prompt numbers of questions, or the pictures in a new book will take the children, in imagination, to the four corners of the globe. If, occasionally, a mother can be persuaded to bring a new baby to the school, most useful lessons can be given to the children concerning the need for them to care for *their* younger brothers and sisters. If it can be arranged that the baby shall be bathed and fed, the children can be shown how they can help in getting ready the bath, towel, talcum-powder, etc., and thereby they will learn that if in their own homes there is a new baby they can help to care for it, instead of being jealous of it.

When, at this time, the children give their own news, they must be taught to speak one at a time, a discipline which develops control. The news-time presents an excellent opportunity for informal speech-training, although the desire of the teacher to correct faults of speech should not be allowed to discourage the children's spontaneity.

Story Telling

All normal children say at some time during the day, “Tell us a story, *please*.” The frequency of the request is alone sufficient indication that stories satisfy one of children's most important needs. The sigh which passes around a group of children when they have been told a suitable story as it should be told is in itself proof that they had a longing for such an experience and that the longing has been satisfied.

There are many very good books of stories for

young children, well illustrated with photographs and drawings, and with these children can sit and tell *themselves* stories. There are also stories which are best suited to be *read* to children, such as the Beatrix Potter stories which are enjoyed by most children of five years and over. Nevertheless, children of nursery years need something more than the telling of a story for its own sake, such as those which can be read to slightly older groups. A story in the teller's own language forges between her and the children a link of intimacy, if the chosen story is in every way suitable and is well told.

Why do we tell stories to the under-fives?

1 The first and most important reason is that stories give children so much pleasure. Stories bring fun and laughter, through them they can experience sorrow and joy, tenderness and pity. Stories often awaken a sense of wonder, a recognition of right and wrong, some knowledge of what is beautiful and what is ugly. Stories can produce, also, a determination in the children that they will protect and cherish the weak and unfortunate. Children enjoy experiencing and understanding such things, and they are valuable contributions to their development.

2 By hearing stories, children enjoy new experiences and their knowledge of life and of the world is increased. It must be remembered that the experience of the average young child is very limited. He is familiar only with the details of his home and his school and the life within them, and to some extent he knows the life of the streets in his immediate neighbourhood. Stories thus increase and enrich his experience. To the town child they give an insight into the wonders of the country and the seaside, the habits and care of animals and the fun of the beach. To the country child they can open up a new world, with traffic-signals, lifts, and quick transport, fire-engines and water-carts, mounted policemen and newspaper-sellers.

3 Stories add to children's vocabularies and develop appreciation of words and phrases.

4. Stories told to a group of children can form a bond between them. The boisterous, the shy, the self-conscious and the difficult, all can join to listen to a story.

All these reasons for telling stories make clear the essentials to be looked for in choosing stories. Before a story can do all that is required of it it must—

(a) be chosen as being suited to the age and the mental development of the children to whom it is to be told,

(b) be simply constructed, so that it is easily understood,

(c) contain something of the dramatic,

(d) leave the children with a sense of satisfaction, with wider knowledge and an increased

understanding and with a feeling that there is order, rhythm, love and justice in life.

Stories for the nursery class should deal with the familiar; with people, animals and situations which the children have met or which they are likely to meet. Young children are very literal-minded and are intensely interested in the real; they are not yet ready for phantasy and make-believe, so fairy stories should not be told to them.

Every story told to children should have running through it one central idea, and it should have an easily-understood beginning, some suspense as it develops, and a satisfactory ending. For example, in the story "Sleepy Head," by Maude Lindsay, a child is first found asleep and he is eventually awakened by the Sun after the birds, a cockerel and the wind have tried in vain to rouse him. Once awake, the child washes and dresses himself, he has a happy day and finally goes again to bed. Such a story, with a series of familiar situations, and with every-day problems satisfactorily solved, children in the nursery class find completely absorbing.

As children approach the age of five, they enjoy a simple plot, as in the story of the "Harvest Mice" as told by Elizabeth Clarke. The repetition of words and phrases and the cumulative effect give this story added interest to children of all ages.

Nature stories should always be accurate; animals should not be made to behave in any way which is contrary to their nature and they must not be made to wear clothes. If they are made to talk to one another, it must be made clear that they "talk" only in their own fashion. For instance, "The little dog said, 'Wow-wow!' which meant, 'Where are you going?' and the big dog said, 'Wuff-wuff,' which meant, 'I am going to the market!'" No tale which arouses fear of animals should be told to young children. For this and other reasons stories such as "Little Red Riding-hood" are quite unsuitable at this stage.

The type of "nature" stories in which flowers leave their plants and dance down the garden path in the Spring sunshine is very undesirable for children of this age, these should in no circumstances be told to a nursery class.

The Technique of Telling Stories

A four-year-old once said to his teacher, "I love you to tell us stories; would you like to know why?" When the teacher said that she *would* like to know, the child continued, "Well, when *you* tell a story there are little lights dancing in your eyes and all around your teeth!" How better could anyone describe the first prerequisite of the successful story-teller - that she should herself enjoy telling stories and that she should make her pleasures in them quite obvious?

The successful story-teller will also remember these things

- 1 To prepare the story well, so that she is word-perfect, nothing so easily spoils any story as a teller's hesitancy

- 2 To use a clear but quiet voice and to tell the story naturally. The extremes of being histrionic and so over-stimulating children, or telling the story in a flat monotone which produces boredom must both be avoided

- 3 To identify herself with the characters in the story without self-consciousness, whether she is describing the affairs of humans or animals

- 4 That facial expression and gesture are most important, smiles and scowls are often needed, as well as "expression" in the teller's voice

- 5 That simple language is essential. When children reach the age of four years, however, there can be introduced a few words and phrases which they will not understand but which they will enjoy for the beauty of the words. In such a story as a modified version of the old Russian folk-story, "Babushka," as an example, children delight in joining the teacher in repeating, time after time, "And the Wise Men carried gold, and sparkling jewels, and frankincense, and myrrh." As a general rule, it is better to use the simplest language when telling stories to children under four

- 6 The repetition of a word or phrase helps to hold the children's interest. When such repetitions are used, children know what to expect at intervals, and this knowledge, which allows them to take part in the telling of the story, increases the children's pleasure.

The Use of Illustrations in Story-Telling

If a large illustration is available it is best shown to the children before the story begins, it can then be hung on the playroom wall so that the children can return to it when the story is ended. If it is shown during the telling of the story it becomes a distraction and the continuity of the story is broken. All illustrations so used should be large, brightly-coloured,

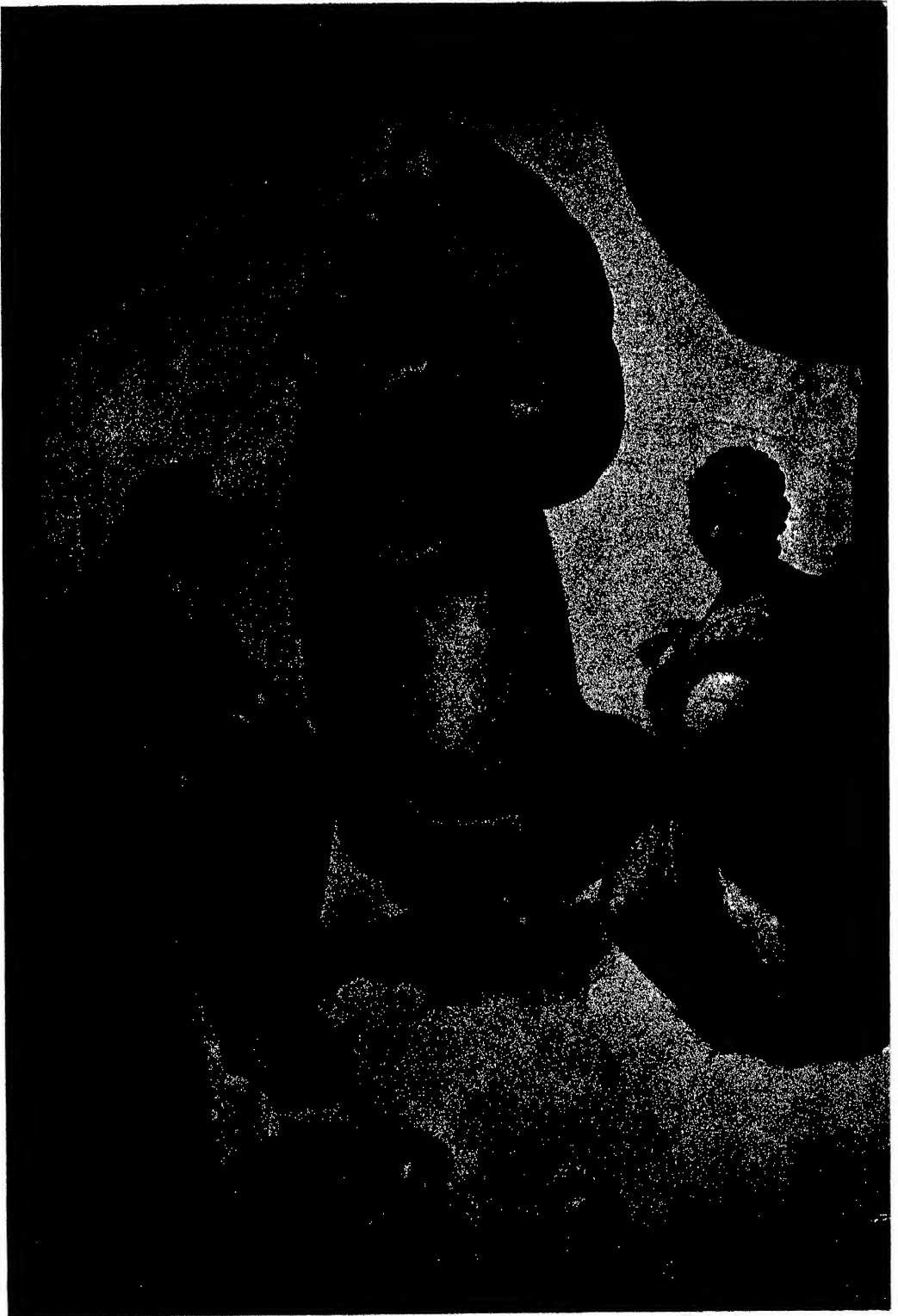


FIG. 12

The Sistine Madonna by Raphael

and simple in outline. They should be true to life, and portray humans and animals in proportion.

Some Simple Rules to be Remembered

1. Arrange the children in a circle, either in chairs or seated cross-legged on the floor. If they use chairs, sit in a small chair with them, if they sit on the floor the teller also should sit there.
2. Make sure that the children are comfortable and well spaced. If they sit too close together they tend to distract one another.
3. Be quite sure that all distractions are removed before the story begins. If any child has a book or some other thing in his hands, ask him to put it on a nearby shelf or in a cupboard.
4. Do not interrupt a story to gain an individual's attention, but recapture interest by bringing in his name, thus, "And do you know what the cat did then, Jimmy?"
5. Be alert for individual children's difficulties, for example, if, from any child's expression it is obvious that he has not understood what has been said, or if he is apprehensive concerning the events of the story, or if he is not amused by an incident which makes all the other children laugh, try to continue the story with a tactful phrase of explanation or with a repetition of a previous sequence in different words.
6. Look around the circle as the story is told, so that every child may feel that the story is being told to him.
7. Remember that children like to tell stories as well as listen to them. If a child tries to tell a story, listen with the same attention which you would expect to receive from him.

Bible Stories

If these are told, great care should be taken to ensure that they are within the range of children's understanding. Thus, stories of the Miracles and many Old Testament stories such as that of the child Samuel in the Temple, are better left to be given to the children when they are much older. The Christmas Story, as it might have been told of the shepherds or the Magi; stories of Christ's childhood and boyhood and of His friends in manhood are better suited to children of the nursery class.

The Christmas Story in a version such as the following appeals to children from the age of three years. (The teacher should first be certain that the children know what a shepherd is and what is a manger. One of the many beautiful pictures of the Nativity should be hung in the

playroom, at the children's eye-level, so that they can look at it before and after the story is told.)

The Christmas Story

(in a form suitable for under-fives)

A long, long time ago some shepherds were watching their sheep on the hills. It was a very cold night, so they built a large fire on the hill to keep themselves warm. Sometimes they rubbed their hands (like this); sometimes they stamped their feet, sometimes they swung their arms because, as I have said, it was a very cold night. While the shepherds sat in front of their fire, listening carefully for any sound from their sheep, they talked of many things.

Suddenly, one of the shepherds said, "Sssh!" They listened, and heard "Maa-aa maa-aa!" The shepherd said, "One of my little lambs is unhappy, I must go and find it and see what is wrong." So he wrapped his big cloak around him and picked up his big stick which is called a crook and walked across the hill until he found the little lamb which was so unhappy because it was cold and it could not find its mother. And the shepherd said, "You poor little lamb, come with me, I will comfort you and keep you warm." So he put the little lamb under his cloak and right under his arm (like this). Then he went back to the other shepherds sitting around the fire, and again they talked of many things.

Suddenly, there was a great light in the sky, a light so bright that the shepherds had to cover their eyes with their hands. When the light had gone, the shepherds looked up at the sky and saw a most beautiful star. They had never seen such a beautiful star before. Then one of the shepherds said, "Look, the star is moving! Let us follow it!" So three of the shepherds pulled their big cloaks around them, and picked up their big sticks, which are called crooks, and they walked a long, long way over the hills and across the fields until they saw that the star was moving no longer. It was shining brightly over a stable in a little village called Bethlehem of Judea.

As the shepherds came to the door of the stable, a man came out and said, "Ssh! The baby's asleep." And the shepherds heard a beautiful voice singing -

*Oh, sing lullay lullay,
So softly sleeping here,
Oh, keep asleep my little one,
Oh, keep asleep my dear*

(Air from Boughton's "Bethlehem")

The shepherds tip-toed into the stable and there, lying on some soft hay in the manger, they saw the most beautiful baby. They had never, *never* seen such a lovely baby before.

"What is his name?" they whispered, and his mother answered, "His name is Jesus, my name is Mary, and His father's name is Joseph."

One of the shepherds said, "Here is my cloak, as a present for Him, it will help to keep him warm, if you spread it over the manger when the night gets cold." The second shepherd said, "Mary, here are some flowers which I picked from the hedges as I walked across the fields. They will help to make the stable look pretty for the child Jesus." The third shepherd was sad,

because he had no present for the baby, but just then he heard, "Maa-aa! maa-aa!" He had forgotten all about the little lamb tucked under his coat and under his arm. He gave it to Mary, saying, "Here is my present for the child Jesus. When He is a little bigger He will love to touch the lamb's wool, which is so soft and warm."

Mary thanked the shepherds for their lovely gifts, and when they had looked at the lovely baby once more they said good-bye to Mary and Joseph and crept out of the stable on tip-toe. As they went across the fields, they heard Mary singing,

*Oh, sing lallay lallay,
So softly sleeping here,
Oh, keep asleep my little one,
Oh, keep asleep my dear*

And as the shepherds walked across the fields, and over the hills back to their flocks, they met many people, and they told everyone of what they had seen.

All this happened a long long time ago, on the hills by the village of Bethlehem of Judea, on the first Christmas Day. Christmas Day is Jesus' birthday, and because it is such a very special birthday we give Christmas presents to each other.

The atmosphere is not always right for story-telling, sometimes it will be obvious that more activity is needed, when simple singing-games will give the children the exercise which they need and at the same time, bring to them the fun and laughter which is their birthright. Such games, also, play an unobtrusive part in correcting faults of speech, while the children learn poise and control and co-operation. Certain games, such as the dramatizing of familiar stories, allow play of a more formal character, the children's initiative is developed in the interpretation of character and in the choice of partners. Lessons in self-discipline are also now learned. The teacher has to remember many simple rules, if this singing-game period is to be a success.

First, the games to be played must be those which the teacher will herself enjoy and she must be sure that they provide an outlet for the children's growing imaginative powers and for the expression of fantasy-life. The teacher's attitude to the game can make it either joyous or boring. If she is bored, and plays the game mechanically, without any sense of fun, the children will be bored. Games are best avoided if the teacher feels that she must hold herself detached or aloof from them, instead of co-operating freely.

The choice of games must be made either by the teacher or by a certain number of children,

who are each given a turn in choosing their favourites. It is always wrong to say, "Shall we play so-and-so or so-and-so?" If this *is* done, it will always happen that various children will clamour for different games. In the same way, the choice of stories and songs must be made by an individual, either the teacher or a child, if the ready co-operation of the group is to be obtained.

When a new game is introduced to a class, the words must be spoken clearly by the teacher, the action should be explained and the tune sung to the children before the game begins. In short, the game must be thoroughly understood by all who are to take part in it. If other adults are present, they should not stand apart, as spectators, but they should be encouraged to join in.

Singing combined with energetic movement is best avoided; instead, it should be arranged that half the group shall sing while the rest go through the actions, the two groups exchanging roles before the game ends. If the singing-game appeals to the group as a whole, it is better and far more natural to repeat the game a few times instead of playing several.

If the games require one or more children to take a leading part, no child who is uncertain or reluctant to play this lead should be made to do so. It is better that the teacher herself should take the lead when the game is first played, before any child is invited to do so. When the teacher takes the lead, she should do so in the fashion of a *demonstrator*, not an instructor.

If, as often happens, more children wish to take the lead than it is possible to allow, the teacher will avoid confusion by making a choice herself and saying, "The rest of you shall have your turn another day, perhaps to-morrow, and if not to-morrow, the next day, but your turn *will* come." This is a good lesson in control for the disappointed ones, but the teacher must be careful to remember her part of the bargain, and to ensure that their turns *do* come within a reasonable time. Otherwise, the children's confidence in her will be severely shaken and they may develop a feeling that they have been cheated.

Free movement to music follows a story more frequently than do singing games.

Music

It is almost certain that man has always had a well marked sense of rhythm, as have many animals, and it is probable that rhythm is older than melody. We cannot tell the age of either, much less suggest when in man's history he first repeated melodious sounds in rhythm and made

tram by tapping or swaying to the rhythm of the engine or the movement. In the nursery school, two-year-olds enjoy clapping hands rhythmically while nursery rhymes are sung or played; they delight in the simple instruments of the percussion band—drums, cymbals, bells.

All music for the youngest children should be



FIG. 13
Movement to Music

the first music. Perhaps singing developed from efforts to mimic the calls of animals and birds when early hunters tried to lure them within range of their primitive weapons. What is certain is that rhythm was an important factor in the development of man and it is equally true that it still is.

The baby sitting in a high chair taps the tray with a spoon and gradually evolves a rhythm. A little later, he will amuse himself in a train or a

very simple, and the teacher should stress the beat in the rhythm. From the youngest children little more can be expected, in response to music, than the clapping of hands, the tapping of hands on their knees to the simplest rhythms, the singing of the easiest nursery rhymes and marching to loud or soft music. It must be remembered that at this age children's musical play should be in accord with their other activities. They are now at a stage when they

must manipulate; they want to move their fingers and their hands and their feet; they need movement in everything. In plenty of movement even the youngest children find the basis of all music.

Music in the nursery class should always be considered as a play activity. Just as the children are given paint and brushes as a means of self-expression, so music is offered them as a means by which to express emotion and as a relaxation.

Children of about three years will begin to make a more skilled use of the percussion band instruments and will begin to respond to changes in tone and pitch. Like changes will also be seen in their movements, when a piano is played loudly they will stamp, when it is played softly they will walk on the tips of their toes. Now, also, the children will enjoy transforming themselves into butterflies - or elephants, they will try to represent a snowstorm, or a thunderstorm. The teacher can increase the fun of such a game by quickly and unexpectedly changing the pitch and time of her music.

At this time, there must be ample opportunity for free expression—running, marching, skipping and galloping. Through such exercises, children's awareness of, and responsiveness to, music are developed and spontaneity is encouraged. If the same tunes are always used for specific movements, children tend to associate the movement with the tune, and do not learn to be alert for a change in the rhythm. It is therefore better to employ one tune and to change its time for the varying movements.

Singing Games

These play their part in musical training from about the age of three to five years. They are among the very few nursery class activities which need to be organized. By means of them children can be encouraged to listen to tunes and to enjoy them. Singing games teach co-operation, develop children's initiative and control, and through them children can begin to learn something of chorus-singing.

The singing-game period should not be prolonged, one or two games only should be played, and it should not be a part of each day's activi-

ties: above all, the spirit of fun should never be lost. Every new game should first be explained to the children, and its point and order described. It should then be sung to them before the children are invited to join in. The chosen games should give the children opportunity to identify themselves with everyday characters, rabbits or horses, policemen, bus-drivers, window-cleaners, washerwomen, just as they were given opportunity in free movement to music to choose their own interpretation of what they heard.

As children approach the age of five, they are able to listen to simple stories told on the piano and they enjoy interpreting such stories in their own way. As an example, the children can be told a story about a family setting-off for a day in the country: first they travel in a bus, then they walk carefully down a main road before reaching a quieter road where they can stude along. At the end of this road they scamper across a common, a stream is crossed by stepping-stones to reach a bank where baskets can be filled with blackberries. At the end of the day, the return walk to the bus is slow and hesitating, but the bus quickly takes the family home to prepare for bed and to sleep. Such a simple story will require for its interpretation a variety of movements and gestures. Having told the story, the teacher should then play it while the children listen, saying as she proceeds, "Can you *hear* the bus?" . . . "Can you *hear* them running across the common?" . . . "Can you *hear* them walking very slowly to the bus stop?" While the music is repeated, the children should be allowed to interpret the story in their own way.

Singing

As in all kinds of musical education, singing should offer the children enjoyment and fun. Simple tunes with an attractive melody should be chosen, and as far as possible the songs should be about familiar things, although nonsense songs interest many children. As a general rule, the traditional nursery rhymes are best suited to the nursery-class children, and it should be remembered that there are scores of rhymes other than the hackneyed "Simple Simon,"

"Little Bo-Peep," "Sing a Song of Sixpence," "Baa-baa Black Sheep" and so on. Children between four and five also enjoy songs which are not nursery rhymes in the accepted sense. Numbers of collections of such songs are available. Songs should be chosen for their simple refrain and some repetition of phrase.

Children's voices are much higher in pitch than adults, and this must be remembered by the teacher when choosing the key of a tune. The voice compass of most children in a nursery class will be D-natural upwards, and if songs are pitched too low it will be found that children will tend to "croon" and to drawl their words, not to sing. When teaching new songs it will be found that it is best first to sing and play the songs several times, encouraging the children to join in. If the song is suitable, the children will need little persuasion.

Finger-plays for the youngest children are best sung by the teacher while the children manipulate their fingers. Before the age of three, children rarely show any desire to sing the words and they should not be persuaded to do so.

"Do's and Don'ts" for the Music Period

1. It must be remembered that every music period, whether with percussion or finger-plays, singing-games or free rhythmic movement, should be short. For children between four and five it should not last longer than twenty minutes, and for younger children it can be yet shorter. Throughout a short period the undivided attention of the children can be expected. If the period is extended, a gradual flagging of interest will follow.

2. For all free movement encourage the children to be bare-footed.

3. Encourage the children to use all the available space. If necessary, when children tend to concentrate in the centre of the playroom, demonstrate that there is very much more room at either end of the room and at the sides.

4. Do not compel any child to join in. If this is done, the exercises are no longer "free." The best incentive is to ensure that the children who join in readily enjoy the period so much that any who hold back will wish to share in it.

5. Introduce variety and, when it is possible, follow any suggestions which the children make.

6. A teacher who cannot play the piano while she watches the children can use instead percussion band instruments. Children will enjoy skipping and running to a well-defined rhythm tapped on the drum, and while using this the teacher can join in moving

with them. Alternate loud and soft music can be replaced by rhythms on the drum and tambourine.

7. Remember that nursery rhymes, good folk-songs, and swinging tunes such as sea-shanties, provide the best music for under-fives. They do not need and should not be expected to understand music which appeals only to the trained ear of the adult listener.

8. The lack of percussion band instruments in the nursery class may be overcome by making substitutes

Drums can be improvised from round tins, painted in attractive colours. Drumsticks for use with these should be padded.

Tambourines can be made by stretching linen very tightly over embroidery-frames.

Cymbals can be represented by two discs of five-ply wood.

Triangles can be made from metal meat-skewers.

9. A teacher who cannot play an instrument well enough to give the children "musical stories" should employ gramophone records. (A list of suggested records will be found at the end of this section.)

Throughout this section it has been suggested that music can be provided by a piano only, because this instrument is to be found in most schools. The ideal instrument is the recorder, and pipes or any other wood-wind instrument which permits the teacher to join with the children. They are a very delightful means of making music, as is also the violin. Teachers who are fortunate enough to be reasonably good players of any of these instruments should therefore use them.

Poets have written much about music. Great men and women have been inspired by it to achieve great things. Experience has shown that music can bring to life in children an impulse to love, and to worship, which may otherwise have remained dormant. The most difficult children in many nursery classes have responded to music, and anti-social children have been transformed by it into happy co-operative beings.

Gramophone Records which tell "Musical Stories"

Rhythmic Series, Columbia DB 1676

„ DB 1587

„ DB 1588

„ DB 1591

"Let's Pretend" Rhythmic Games

Columbia B. 8100

„ B. 8098

„ B. 8099

Informal Group Interests

As a change from organized activities, a visit to a nearby park may be arranged. This is especially useful when the play space available to the nursery class is limited, or where there is no garden. Such a visit will provide an opportunity for vigorous running and for rolling on the grass. Numberless questions asked about trees and flowers will give the teacher an opportunity to stimulate children's interest in Nature and, in an unobtrusive way, to prepare the ground for later questionings about propagation. Exciting expeditions for small groups of children can also be arranged in which they may see other people at their work. Watching bakers, blacksmiths, mechanics, shopkeepers and others will provide the children with a great deal that is interesting and at the same time increase their knowledge of life, and will awaken a realization of the dependance of one person upon another. Such visits should be arranged only when the accompanying staff is sufficient to ensure the proper supervision of the children, so that the visits will be associated, in their minds, only with pleasure. "Nagging" children, an inevitable result of too few adults taking too many children outside the school gates, should be avoided at all costs. The pace of walking should be regulated, so that the slower children are not harassed, but not allowed to lag behind, while the stronger walkers are not held back to the slowest pace of the poor walkers. When any of these visits take children across roads in the neighbourhood, the set rules laid down for children's safety should be explained to them, so that they may develop traffic sense.

It is often useful, during the second morning period, to introduce to the children any new material, particularly such things as constructional toys, which otherwise they may mis-use. If a group is shown, slowly and methodically, how to handle the new equipment, and if one or two are invited to use it themselves, it will be found that when they later choose that toy there will be really beneficial concentration upon it. If, for example, a tug-boat is to be built from a dozen pieces, these should be assembled slowly in full view of the children so that they can watch its construction and see the finished article.

This time can also be employed in what may be termed "maintenance tasks," such as the cleaning of the aquarium as described earlier.

At about 11.30 preparation for dinner begins. As the mealtime must be, for the sake of health and order, observed punctually, it must be clearly understood by all the children that they should be ready to sit down when the meal is ready to be served. At least five minutes notice should be given them before they are expected to put away their playthings. Failure to do this will often produce feelings of frustration in the minds of the children who have been engrossed in play, and aggressiveness and bad temper may follow. Adults should show understanding and imagination in handling the various situations which may arise at such times. For example, if a child has spent some time in piecing together a constructive toy or in building a model of his own planning, he should not be expected to dismantle it and put it away. The teacher should offer to store it on a high shelf, out of the reach of other children, or in her own cupboard, so that the child can return to his work later in the day or on the following morning.

"Warters"—one for each table—should be chosen, and these should be the first to go to the toilet and washing room, so that they can lay the tables in readiness for the meal. All children, when using the lavatory, should be taught to close the door and to flush the pan before they leave.

At this time, well before the midday meal, the children should be encouraged to take their own mugs and to draw for themselves a drink of water.

Children should be trained to—

1. Cleanse their nostrils (soft tissue should be kept in a box, for this purpose, and a tin with a lid provided to receive soiled pieces). These tins should be clearly marked "Clean" and "Dirty" and the contents of the second tin should be frequently removed and destroyed

- 2 To roll their sleeves to the elbows

3. Where portable bowls are used, to carry water in small jugs and to pour it into the bowls without spilling

- 4 First, to wash faces and dry them, then to wash the backs and palms of the hands very carefully. The use of nail brushes should be encouraged.

5. To dry hands thoroughly, especially between the fingers

- 6 To pour away carefully the dirty water into a pail conveniently placed

7. To rinse the bowl and to leave it clean for the next user

8. To comb their hair, low mirrors are an incentive to ensure that this is done thoroughly younger children may need help in tying ribbons, but the actual combing should be done by the children

It is most important that reasonable time shall be allowed for these needs; the children should never be hustled or needlessly hurried

Laying of Tables

The waiters should help the adults in arranging the tables in such a way that the meal can be an intimate friendly occasion and so that the needs of the children can be quickly seen.



FIG 14

The Nursery Class at Dinner

As children finish their toilet, they should be occupied in such a way that their hands will not again become dirty before the whole group has washed and dinner is served. Otherwise, the children will not understand the relation between cleanliness and meal-times. Gramophone records of simple but good music, and the singing of nursery rhymes and finger-plays, provide an interest for those children who do not wish to look at books.

Tables are best arranged in horse-shoe order, with the serving-table across the open end of the "shoe." From a special drawer, the cloths or mats are carried to the tables. A certain number of places should be laid with spoons and forks and others with knives and forks, for in the choice of cutlery, as in all material, there should be grading according to children's age and ability. The youngest children will therefore use spoons and forks and the older ones

knives and forks. For reasons of cleanliness, waiters should be taught to carry all cutlery on trays, and to put them on to the tables without handling knife-blades, the prongs of forks or the bowls of spoons. The necessary number of plates and serving-spoons should be placed on the serving-table. A trolley, its shelves covered with table-oilcloth, should be placed near the serving-table, and on this trolley should be large empty jars to receive dirty cutlery.

Small vases of flowers or plants should be placed upon each table; the lack of an abundance of flowers need not rob the children of this added interest. One flower in a small vase often does more to encourage an appreciation of beauty and to develop observation than a number of flowers packed together. In springtime, saucers or shallow dishes made into "gardens" of moss with primroses or violets are charming, and in winter, when the need for some colour in the playroom is so necessary, vases of evergreens with one bright chrysanthemum will provide this.

Dinner is served at 12.15. It is important that everything connected with the meal shall be dainty, for the meal should be, in every way, as near the standard of a meal in the nursery in a good home as it is possible to arrange. It should be a social occasion, not a mere feeding-time. This must be especially remembered in those nursery classes where meals are supplied in containers from a distance. Meals cannot be inviting if they are served from metal receptacles in large ladles. Anything so reminiscent of mass-production methods is best avoided. The dishes should be dietically well-balanced and as full of colour as possible.

Some Important "Do's and Don'ts" for Dinner Time

1. Avoid serving large portions. It is far better to allow children to have two or if necessary three or four small helpings instead of one very big one.

2. In no circumstances should silence be enforced during the meal time. Disorderly behaviour or shouting should be stopped, but happy talk such as is encouraged at the tables of good homes is the standard to be set.

3. Good table-manners should be required of the children. Only with such training will children become acceptable to the larger society which they will later join, and to allow them to grow up with

standards which will not permit them to enter that society with ease and confidence is very unfair.

4. Few children will need feeders after a few weeks in the class and their use should be discouraged.

5. There cannot be any justification for forcing children to eat anything which they find unpalatable. Use of such force will produce only feeding problems, rebellion and antagonism. A teacher's determination to "win the day" by forcing a child to eat what is provided may make him sick—in which case the child "wins." Force can also set up between adult and child a barrier which may never be broken down. Medical opinion is now agreed that only meals which children enjoy are really beneficial to them.

6. The child who is difficult at meal-times may be so from some physical cause, for which expert medical treatment is necessary. More often, such behaviour has other causes. It may be that the child is one who has been indulged by a weak mother or "nagged" by a tired one. On the other hand, the child may have found that refusal to eat is a certain way to win the attention of a neglectful mother. This often happens after the birth of a new baby, when the older child may consider that he is being pushed into the background while the life of the household is centred upon the new arrival. Children may carry these methods of gaining attention into the school, and there is only one way of dealing with this behaviour problem. Such children should be given only exceedingly small portions, and any disinclination to eat even these should be ignored. Unless the lack of appetite has some physical cause, outdoor life and strenuous activity, added to the example of the other children, will soon produce normal behaviour. Until then—and it will rarely take long to produce this result—the untouched or partly-eaten meal should be taken away when the others have finished, without comment.

A typical case of this last kind is well remembered by the writer. A newly-admitted child, whose mother was recognized at sight as being over-indulgent, made no attempt to begin his first meal in the school. This was ignored, as was his repetition of the trick on the following day. On the third day, when again no one apparently took any notice of his neglected meal, he said "Aren't you going to cry? My mummy always cries if I don't eat my dinner!"

The meal should be preceded by a simple Grace, such as "Thank you God for everything" or "Dear Father God, thank you for our good dinner." It will help to secure the right conditions for such a Grace if the teacher first tells the children about the meal which is to be served, taking off dish-covers to show the various items, for the practical mind of the child cannot readily understand a need to be grateful for the generic "kindly fruits of the Earth." This Grace should be followed by a moment's silence, and the attitude and example of the teacher and her helpers is the only means by which to secure this. The hurried prayer, immediately followed by the request, "Put your hands away," can

never make for reverence. If the teacher does not feel within herself that there is need for thankfulness, or if, as sometimes happens, the children do not attain the necessary repose, the prayer is better left unsaid.

Rusks, which are good for the teeth, should now be carried to the tables by the waiters. With these, also, children can be occupied while the meal is being served. An older child can help with the serving of vegetables, but it is important that an adult should add to each plate the requisite amount of meat or other protein, directing the waiter to give it to a named child. In this way, the teacher, who should know the likes and dislikes of individual children, and the size of their appetites, can plan portions so as to avoid any overloading of plates which may discourage children from sampling the meal and often causes waste.

Children should be permitted to start the meal as soon as they are served, they should not be expected to wait until all are served. When every child is served, the teacher should be able to sit at the serving table and give a friendly eye to her family. As each child finishes, he should be asked personally if he would like more. When he has had all that he requires, he should be expected to take his dirty plate to the trolley and to put his cutlery into the jar provided to receive them. As children finish the first course, the teacher can begin to serve the second. This can be carried to the children by waiters or fetched by individuals. On no account should the waiters be hurried through their first course to be ready to serve the second. It is much better to choose two sets of waiters, one for the first course and one for the second, those who are to serve the second being given the first helpings of the first course. Dirty plates and spoons are disposed of after the second course in the same way as those used for the first. At the end of the meal, orange juice can be served. If cod-liver oil is given with the orange-juice, it must be well stirred in, to ensure that none clings to the sides of the mugs. Also at the end of the meal children can be given a large piece of raw carrot or part of an apple, to clean their teeth. This is recommended, particularly, by doctors who disapprove of teeth-cleaning with brushes unless the tooth-brushes can be always kept quite clean. The

best plan, perhaps, is to give children carrot or apple and to win the co-operation of the parents to ensure that careful teeth-cleaning, with really clean brushes, is done at home. The last child to leave each table should be expected to shake and fold the table-cloth.

After dinner, each child should go to the lavatory, afterwards rinsing his hands and removing from his mouth with his face-flannel any food-stains which may be there. The thorough washing which preceded dinner need not be repeated and during the afternoon the face-flannels should be boiled.

The children will need little encouragement to help in sweeping up any crumbs which may have been dropped and to join in setting out their beds.

Rest Period

This should last from approximately 1.15 to 2.30.

1. Beds should be placed as far apart as possible. If the children sleep indoors windows should be wide open. Out of doors, care should be taken to ensure that no child is exposed to intense sunlight or to a cold wind. In cold weather, an extra blanket should be supplied, and children's feet well wrapped.

2. The beds should be so arranged that heads are as far apart as possible, to reduce the risk of droplet infection (see illustration on page 134). Special care should be taken to see that children's nostrils are clean before they settle to rest.

3. Shoes should be taken off and placed neatly beside or beneath the beds.

4. Newly-enrolled children should be given a soft toy to fondle while they rest, if this will help them to settle down happily.

During the rest period, as at other times, there should be a certain elasticity in the arrangements. Sturdy children of watchful parents, who ensure adequate night rest for their children, should be expected only to relax and to lie down with outstretched legs. For the sake of those who need deep sleep and the stillness which encourages it, the children who do not sleep should be required to be quiet. Those who do not need sleep should be allowed to get up after a short time and picture books and other

materials should be provided to keep them quietly occupied.

2.30-3.0 p.m. As the children waken, they put on their shoes and help to fold their blankets and carry away their beds. They then have a drink of water or orange juice.

3.0-4.0 p.m. If the weather is suitable, this last hour of the day is spent in the open air, enjoying free play and when parents or older

Variation of Day's Programme in Bad Weather

The two playrooms are given over to the children's use from 9.30 until all the children have arrived and the staff are free to proceed with the usual routine. In one room is concentrated all the smaller equipment which is normally used in the playground, and in the



FIG. 15

Resting after Dinner

brothers and sisters arrive to take the children home care must be taken to ensure that every child has a handshake from at least one adult, so that the day ends, as it started, on a personal note. Incidents and interests are now retailed by the children to their escorts as they go homewards. Often there are small groups talking about the school activities of the day, and what is to be done on the morrow.

other quieter play such as is usual indoors. The children should be free to pass from one to the other at will.

At about 10.0 o'clock, the usual programme is resumed, except that it should provide for the children as much movement as possible, such as marching and skipping to music, the more vigorous indoor games and any other means of giving the children exercise to make up for that

which they have lost by reason of being unable to play in the garden. In the afternoon, in place of free play, one or two of the following can be substituted; story-telling, percussion band, sense-training games, cleaning cutlery and/or any other more detailed cleaning which children can undertake.

When children are indoors during the whole day, playrooms are more likely to become untidy. Before the day ends, therefore, the children can be encouraged to seek out any disarranged material or badly-packed toys by a "Look-around" game. They are gathered in the middle of the playroom and told to look all around to find any such disorder and to correct it. This develops their powers of observation and implants in them a sense of orderliness which will be of great value to them later when facing "real-life" situations.

The School Nurse

The part played by the school nurse is most important, and her part has not been included hitherto only because the time of her visit to the class must vary from school to school. It is desirable that her round of visits should be so planned that she visits each school in turn between 9.30 and 10.0 o'clock, so that she can watch the children as they arrive and advise parents and teachers concerning the children's health. Hers is the first responsibility for the children's health, so that her work is essential to the success of the nursery class, for without good health of body the nurture of mind and spirit cannot proceed unhindered, however great the teacher's skill. Very often, the quick eye of the trained nurse has recognized in a child who was apparently well the first symptoms of infection, and thus not only saved the child pain and his parents distress, but also prevented infection from being brought into a school. The efficient nurse will also discuss with parents such matters as clothing, sleeping arrangements, and diet, so that the work in school is reinforced by parental co-operation at home, and her skill in treating promptly and expertly the frequent minor ailments which upset children's health can forestall developments which would otherwise endanger the child's general health.

Sense-training Games

These are modified forms of the old "parlour games," and if they are played in a spirit of fun not only do the children derive a great deal of pleasure from them but they also learn control, for in each game all but one of the children has to keep a secret.

Typical Game to Train Observation and Memory. The teacher places in the middle of the ring a number of objects, e.g. a pencil, a box, a bell, a toy, a pen, and a book. When the children have been given about thirty seconds' view of these, one child is chosen to kneel with closed eyes in front of the teacher. Another child is then asked to remove one of the objects and to hide it behind his back. The first child, now with open eyes, is asked to say which of the six objects has been taken away. This game can gradually be made more difficult by increasing the number of objects and including among them two or more similar objects, say, of different colour, and by asking two or more children each to take away one of them.

Typical Games to Sharpen Senses of Hearing and to Discriminate Tone. A child kneels, with closed eyes, in the middle of the ring with the teacher, by a signal, directs one of the others to call him by name. The kneeling child has then to name the caller.

Again one child is asked to kneel in the ring, with eyes closed, while the teacher asks him to identify different sounds, e.g. tapping on a window, or on a metal tray, ringing a tumbler or tapping a cup; beating a rhythm on a wooden table or on a wooden box or all of these.

Sense of Smell A hygienic form of blind-fold is necessary for this game. A strip of opaque material, such as twill, wide enough to cover the eyes completely, and with elastic attached to hold it in position, can be used if every user has placed inside it a clean sheet of tissue. The blindfolded child is then asked to identify by scent a variety of substances with distinctive odours, say, orange-peel, an apple, cocoa, coffee, metal polish, vinegar, floor-polish, talcum powder, etc.

Sense of Touch. For this game, objects of differing shape and texture are put in turn into the hands of a blindfolded child, who is asked to identify them.

As in the case of group games, it is far better to play one of the sense-training games a number of times than to attempt a number of different games, and as many children as possible should be given a turn at being blindfolded.

An enjoyable game, designed to foster concentration, poise and control, is played as follows—

A large ring is drawn in chalk on the floor of the playroom, and in its centre is placed a low table which has on it tumbler of brightly coloured water, a few sets of wooden cubes one upon another, cardboard picnic plates and small hand-bells. The children sit at the sides of the room until slow music, played on the piano, begins, when they are called, one by one, to walk to the table and pick up one object. They carry this to the chalked ring and walk slowly around it, with tumblers, bells and cubes carried in one hand and plates balanced on the head. They must complete at least one circuit of the ring without spilling any water, or dropping the balanced cubes, or ringing the bells, or upsetting the plates.

A sufficient number of objects to enable half of the group to take part in this game should be provided, and when it is first played the procedure should be explained and demonstrated by the teacher.

Observances on Special Occasions

Every school will have its own customs which are followed on special occasions such as Easter and Christmas. In addition, the nursery class should mark by some simple celebration each child's birthday. Most children will be aware of approaching birthdays, but to ensure that none is overlooked the teacher should have a separate record of birthdates to which she can easily refer. Birthday wishes should be given to each child when he or she arrives, and the nature of the day should be announced when, later in the morning, the children gather in a circle to exchange their news. This will give the child an opportunity to show his birthday cards or gifts, if he chooses, or to describe them, and so to mark the day as a special occasion. Some schools make an effort to produce some kind of birthday-cake (not, of necessity, a cake such as is specially made and iced for older children and adults). In any event, the day can be marked by the lighting of birthday candles, either on the cake or set in a separate holder. A suitable holder can easily be

made by drilling in a small log five holes of a suitable size to receive the candles. As the child whose birthday it is lights the candles, the children count them and then sing a birthday song, such as this (to the tune of "Little Bo-Peep")—

*Tommy is five years old to-day,
He is five years old this morning,
That's why we light five candles bright,
For Tommy is five this morning.*

*Tommy has waited a whole long year
To light these five pretty candles,
And that's why we sing and dance in a ring,
For Tommy is five this morning.*

Children's Questions

It cannot be repeated too often that every question put by a child should be answered frankly, unless the teacher can truthfully say, "I do not know the answer." When she has to say that and if the answer is available in an appropriate text-book, she should undertake to find it for the child. Questions will range over every conceivable subject; what moves the sea to make the tides? . . . why does a toy balloon float in the air? . . . who made the trees and the flowers? . . . why does an aeroplane fly? . . . why do we eat the roots of carrots but not the leaves? . . . why do we eat the leaves of lettuce and not the root? . . . where is heaven? . . . and so on *ad infinitum*.

The writer was once posed the question, after a series about birds and insects, trees and flowers . . . "Who made God?" On this occasion, all previous experience of trying to deal with such a problem had, most unusually, not to be called upon, for another child immediately responded, as though inspired, "God was in the beginning," and the children accepted that essay in metaphysics as a completely satisfactory reply. Only rarely do circumstances save the situation, however, so the teacher must ever be alert for questions concerning anything.

From about the age of three-and-a-half most children will begin to ask questions about birth, and a few will be curious about death. Because birth is closely connected in *adults'* minds with sex, very many—particularly among parents—are reluctant to answer children's questions,

although the *children* put the questions only to widen their general knowledge. Many who will willingly explain how an oak-tree grows from an acorn, or how a chick grows within an egg find themselves tongue-tied if a child asks, "Where did my baby come from?" or "Where was I before I was born?" These questions can be answered frankly and easily only by adults who

other adults. This possibility is one which must be faced, and it is best handled by winning the co-operation of the children's parents in supporting the teachers' frankness. It must be recognized that the old veil of secrecy over such subjects will never again be restored, so parents and teachers will need to be for a time, pioneers together.



FIG. 16

The Care of Pets

will look within themselves if they find any difficulty in dealing with them. Any embarrassment can be founded only in a half-hidden conviction that the processes of sex and birth are unclean, so it is essential that any teacher of under-fives should first rid herself of all such ideas. Failure to answer questions must produce a furtive air, and people are furtive only when they have something to hide, just as they lie when they are afraid of the truth. Many teachers who would prefer to deal with questions concerning birth in a matter-of-fact way are held back by fear that such knowledge may cause embarrassment in the children's homes, or among

Children who have watched and cared for animals need only a very simple answer. Thus, in a school where there were a number of pets, when one child asked, "Where did my baby come from?" the teacher replied, "Well, where did the baby rabbits come from?" and the child commented, "How silly, I didn't think of that!" and she returned to her occupation completely satisfied. In other cases, it will perhaps be necessary to go into more detail, such as, "Your baby grew from a tiny seed; he was kept snug and warm inside Mummy until he was strong enough to come out into the world." Such a simple, straightforward explanation will be

found acceptable to a majority of young children: it may be received with a satisfied "Oh!"—or it may be followed by some completely different question, say, "What is a waffle?" Experience has shown that under-fives rarely seek more information on this topic than they can readily understand. If any such question is put to the teacher, it is sufficient to say, "I could explain to you, but I do not think that you would understand; ask me again when you are bigger and I will tell you." Such a reply tells the questioner that the adult is not trying to deceive him; that the answer to his question has been only postponed. It should be clearly understood that there is a grave danger in attempting to give children more information than they seek. Thus, the question "Where was I before I was born?" should be answered without any attempt to explain the physical processes of birth.

Children's Difficulties

It is an axiom of British law that every man is innocent until he is proved to be guilty, by a similar rule, it should be an axiom among teachers that all children are normal unless they prove themselves to be abnormal. In every group of individuals, children or adults, there will also be variations from what is accepted, but most of these variations are better called "difficulties" (especially in children) than "abnormalities." The good teacher's affection for all children should be such that she can love them even when they are most difficult.

Thus, when a child is anti-social, the teacher should not evince any surprise or disapproval, but she should give him every opportunity to break anti-social habits. The child who is a bully should be provided with occupations which, by reason of their difficulty, will challenge his desire to dominate. Aggressiveness carefully directed can be altered into ability to lead. Cruelty towards other children or to animals should always be immediately checked, but no punishment should be given. Cruelty often arises from a desire for attention, and so is best defeated if the teacher concentrates her attention upon the child or animal who has suffered cruelty. It may also happen that children are cruel because they are themselves subjected to

cruelty elsewhere—at home, or among older playmates out of school—and if such a cause is discovered to exist, again the co-operation of the parents must be sought to eradicate it. If the teacher suspects any child of being untruthful she should immediately look into his life at school—and, if possible, at home—to discover whether there is any thing or anyone whom the child fears. She should remember, also, that many "lies" are in reality expressions of fantasy life.

Children who purloin others' possessions are are not always dishonest in the sense of adults' description of "thieves." They may have no possessions of their own, or it may be that they are lonely and find it difficult to make friends. The collected treasures may be used as bribes, to win the attention or companionship of other children, so the wise teacher will deal with all apparent dishonesty by seeking the *cause*.

Children who are slow should be praised for what they have achieved, however incomplete the result: the fact that tasks have not been accomplished is overlooked. Children who are quick and always successful should be given special tasks, which will call for still greater effort and perseverance.

It sometimes happens that timidity in children can be traced to a physical cause, such as faulty sight or defective hearing, so any marked timidity should be brought to the attention of the school doctor at the first opportunity. If no physical cause is apparent or suspected, timid children should be quietly reassured. Children who lack self-confidence should be helped unobtrusively to undertake, sometimes, tasks which the teacher knows will offer them certain success.

Throughout every day the teacher should remember that the nursery class is made up of individuals, each with the same instinctive needs but each with different temperaments and backgrounds. For these reasons, every child will first take from the environment of the class that which he most needs. The teacher's love for all the children should be such that it will not diminish when they are difficult or when they prevent her from carrying out her own plans. Her part is to offer them all that which she knows they need, and to encourage them to take it.

METHODS OF TEACHING INFANT CLASSES

THE methods of teaching little children can perhaps be summed up in the words—*free activities*. Development of language is one of the chief aims of the Nursery School and the Infant School, and play has been found the most profitable activity for this development. It is the teacher's business to provide a variety of materials and toys, so that situations will develop that demand the use of language. In school the child has the added incentive to talk and to indulge in dramatic play through contact with other children. But just as valuable as free play is the child's contact with the understanding adult, the teacher, and the stories told and read to the children. The early play periods are regarded by most psychologists as essential to later progress. The teacher bases the activities of the play periods on the tested principles and suggestions of great thinkers—but she must also think for herself since the application of principles must vary with particular schools and children, and for other reasons. Methods are in a sense the detailed applications of principles and these must vary, as we have said before, with circumstances.

It is a help when deciding on methods and details of work to keep in mind the *three* principles stressed by Froebel and other wise thinkers which are of permanent value in the education of children from three to seven. These are—

1. *Learning by Imitation*

Little children are generally intensely interested in imitating the actions of their elders, as in playing house, schools, shops, etc., and thus acquire many useful ideas and *habits*. One does not always realize the valuable teaching that is done *by example*. Often in their imitative play one can see the bad habits that little ones are learning from grown-ups. The picture shown in Fig. 1 is based on one of Froebel's pictures in his "Mother Play." It shows how interested

Froebel was in teaching little ones to recognize social life as represented by the baker or cobbler. Notice in Fig. 1, that domestic, industrial, moral and play elements are all introduced. Following Froebel we make the study of social life the beginning of our teaching. Helping to lay and clear the meal table, putting away the toys, tidying up as mother does, dressing and undressing, all these are games to the little one -- games he shares with us. Thus through the child's love of imitation, orderly habits can be built up, and his language and general knowledge developed as he plays shops or washing-day, etc.

2. *Learning by Doing*

Besides the sharing of what adults do, by observation and imaginative play, the child needs real work and achievement of his own. Froebel says that little children are interested in building, in modelling in sand and clay, in drawing, and in other forms of motor activity, and they may, through these activities sharpen their observation, learn much that is useful, recognize what is beautiful, get practice in thinking and contriving, and find enjoyable leisure occupations. Among the materials Froebel provided, the modelling clay has proved the most valuable. His building bricks were far too small (this defect of size applied at first to most of his material) for children to use without unduly taxing their eyes and nerves. Some of the exercises he suggests for them do not lend themselves to child's play, they are not in touch with the real world of the child.

To-day, in the modern Infant School, the play things the children need fall into five main groups (which of course overlap)

(a) Things that help physical growth, ladders, sliding boards, etc.

(b) Materials for making things. Prepared material such as building blocks, large wooden beads, wooden bricks, empty cotton reels

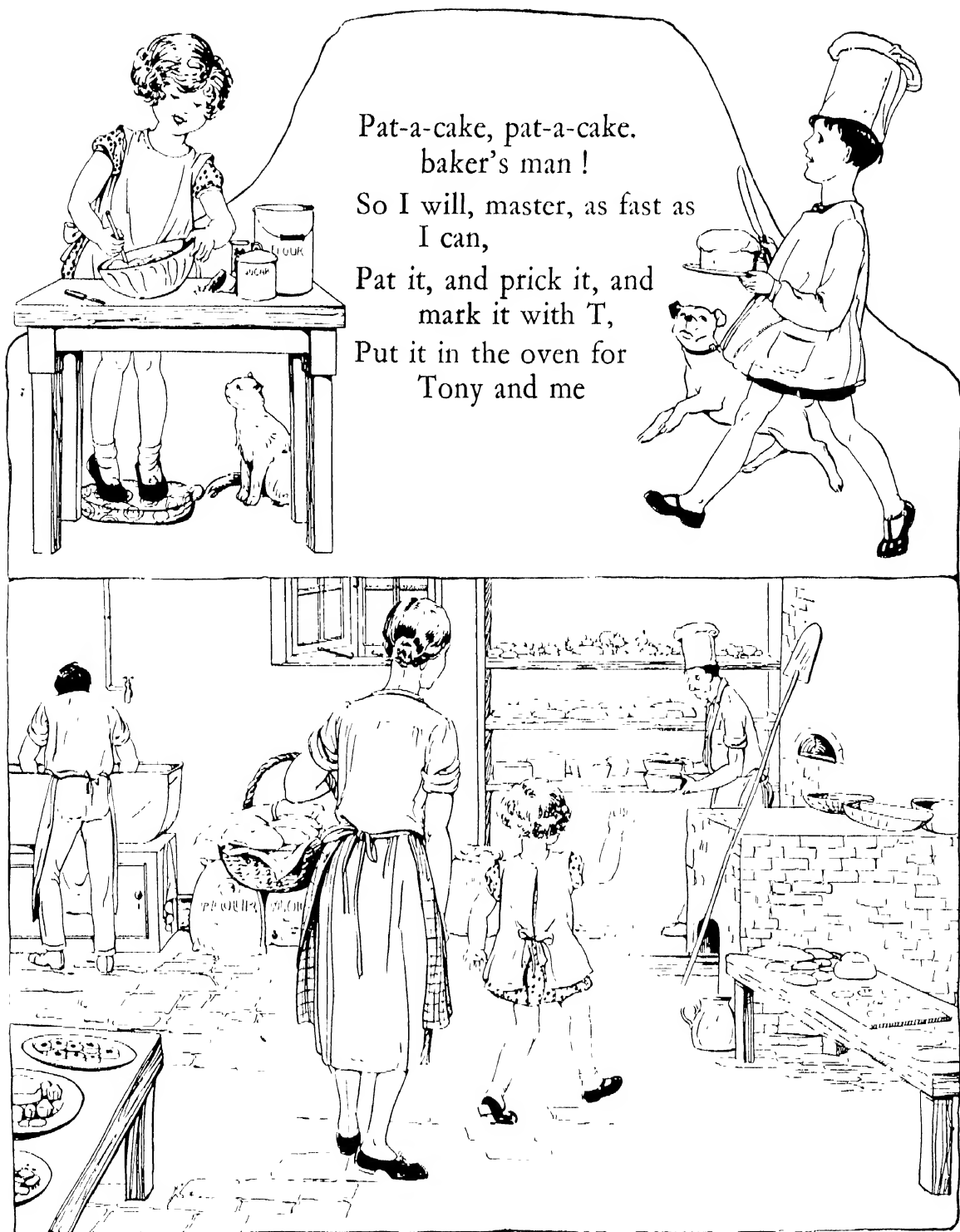


FIG. 1

The game of Pat-a-Cake—showing how Froebel introduces little ones to social life. Notice domestic, industrial, moral, and play elements are all introduced into this picture

painted different colours, coloured sticks that can be stuck together with modelling clay, etc. Raw materials, clay (perhaps the best form of clay for early years is "Plasticine"), sand and water.

(c) Tools, gardening tools, scissors and paper—paper is always welcome for cutting and tearing. At five or six, under proper supervision, children can use hammers, nails, and saw (the nails should be flat-headed). Tools for drawing and painting—large material is essential for this occupation. Sewing material—coarse-mesh canvas, bodkins, coloured thread and raffia, later soft cheap cotton stuff or waste material—weaving on cardboard looms.

(d) Toys—ordinary children's toys—dolls' houses (home-made or bought), dolls, engines, wooden carts for trundling about, etc. Costly and elaborate toys are not necessary and often hinder the pleasant pastime of "make-believe." In this group we can include chairs and tables because these are easily made into houses, shops, tunnels, ships, and are valuable in "make-believe" games. Other valuable material for the child is what is generally known as waste material—for example, odds and ends of material that can be used for "dressing-up" clothes, old wheels, old books (for tunnels), buttons, boxes of all shapes, etc. The handling of a great variety of things and materials is of value and increases the child's vocabulary.

(e) Formal material for getting to know geometrical shapes, sizes, weights, counting, etc. These include some of the Montessori apparatus, bags of shells or bone counters, bundles of coloured sticks—with printed numbers to go with them; a pair of scales with silver sand for weighing, etc. This type of plaything is very attractive to children, and can be easily graded to the stage of development reached by the child.

3. Learning by Games

Froebel noticed also that little ones are interested in ball games, skipping games, follow-my-leader, etc., and that these may be used to train the child in many desirable ways. It is through this principle that we get our systematized plays and games. It will be seen from

this brief summary that Froebel has given us the doctrine of play—which has developed into the free activities of to-day. From him also comes the idea of training for social service. It is he who gave us little chairs and tables that the children can move about for themselves, low cupboards so that they can put their things away themselves and take them out, all of which tend to self-control and helpfulness.

A second person who has greatly influenced the education of young children in our own days is Dr. Montessori who did much work with defective children in Italy. She, like Froebel, believed in self-activity, in letting children do all that they can for themselves. But she did not recognize, as did Froebel, the *educative* value of play. Her didactic materials are designed to bring into the consciousness of children, not *things*, but the *qualities of things*, that is hundreds of graduated colours, sounds, sizes, shapes, lengths, widths, and so forth. This method has worked in the training of sense defectives. But a word of caution must be given with regard to taking over, without thought or criticism, apparatus designed for sub-normal children. The normal thinking child is not content to average things according to their size for long; he does not always want to try out various materials for the sake of experiment; he has some purpose to serve, he has ideas of his own that leap beyond the didactic apparatus. For him it is the appreciation of things that count, not the knowledge of their abstract qualities. Dr. Kilpatrick probably sums up best what we owe to Dr. Montessori when he says—

"Her greatest service lies in her emphasis on the *scientific* conception of education and in the practical utilization of liberty. Dr. Montessori has made us consider the individual—for this must follow from a scientific conception of education."

Although one speaks so frequently of free activities, free activities do not mean that children can do what they like all day. Although there may be no fixed time-table, there must be routine. This creates an atmosphere of peace and security. By routine we mean fixed times for meals, for sleep or rest, etc. Plenty of time for rest is essential, also quiet periods without the interference of the teacher (especially for

little ones under five) when they are free to run about or watch others at work or play, to lie on the floor or grass, or wander at will, learning the scent and the feel of the things around them.

In all methods of teaching discipline is im-

danger to-day from repressive discipline, but there is the danger of young teachers not distinguishing between rightful activity and disorder and roughness on the part of the children. Disorder is that which interferes with the

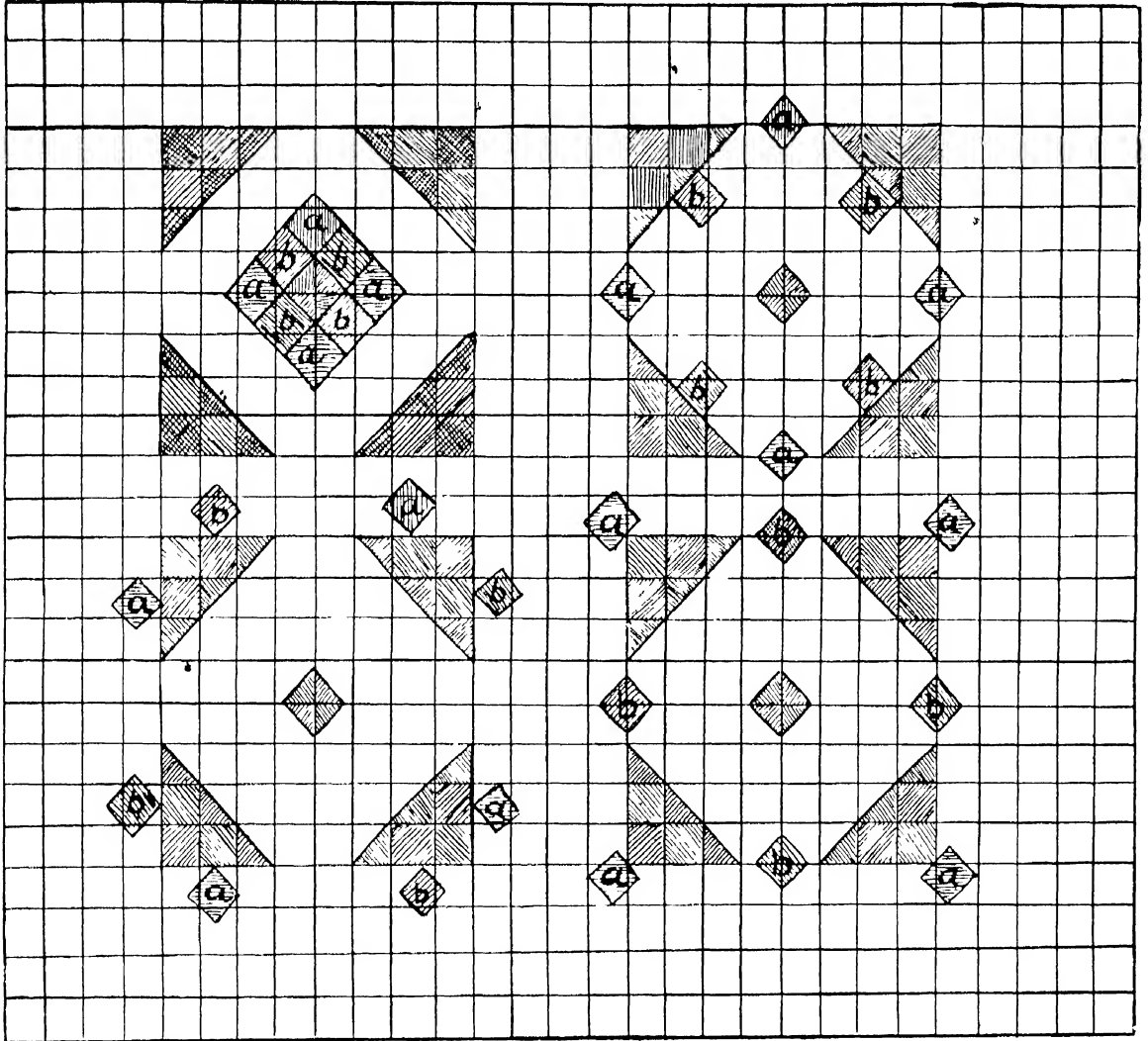


FIG. 2

An example of the old-fashioned "simple-to-complex" kindergarten construction. The children have arranged the blocks to make what Froebel called "Forms of Beauty"

portant—that is of course the *right* kind of discipline. The word discipline as applied to children should mean *all the care and sustenance necessary to physical, moral, and mental growth*. The effect of repressive discipline on intelligent, active, responsive children is often to make them disobedient and inattentive. There is less

progress and the comfort of any member of the class including the teacher.

Good habits are of the first importance in these early days. All activities that tend to make children obedient, orderly, courteous and considerate are being properly conducted. The gospel of good discipline lies in first making the

child willing to do the right thing. We do not want to have to impose virtues on the child from without, but lead him to recognize their value and necessity. We want, as far as possible, our little ones to be good "because *they will*, not because *they must*." The teacher will have little difficulty in securing the right kind of discipline

they should become accustomed to certain *rules of behaviour* which will determine their conduct. This is, after all, only preparing them for life in the bigger world outside.

In the Kindergarten the rules must be very simple and *concrete*. The following is an example: "Put away your work (or play-

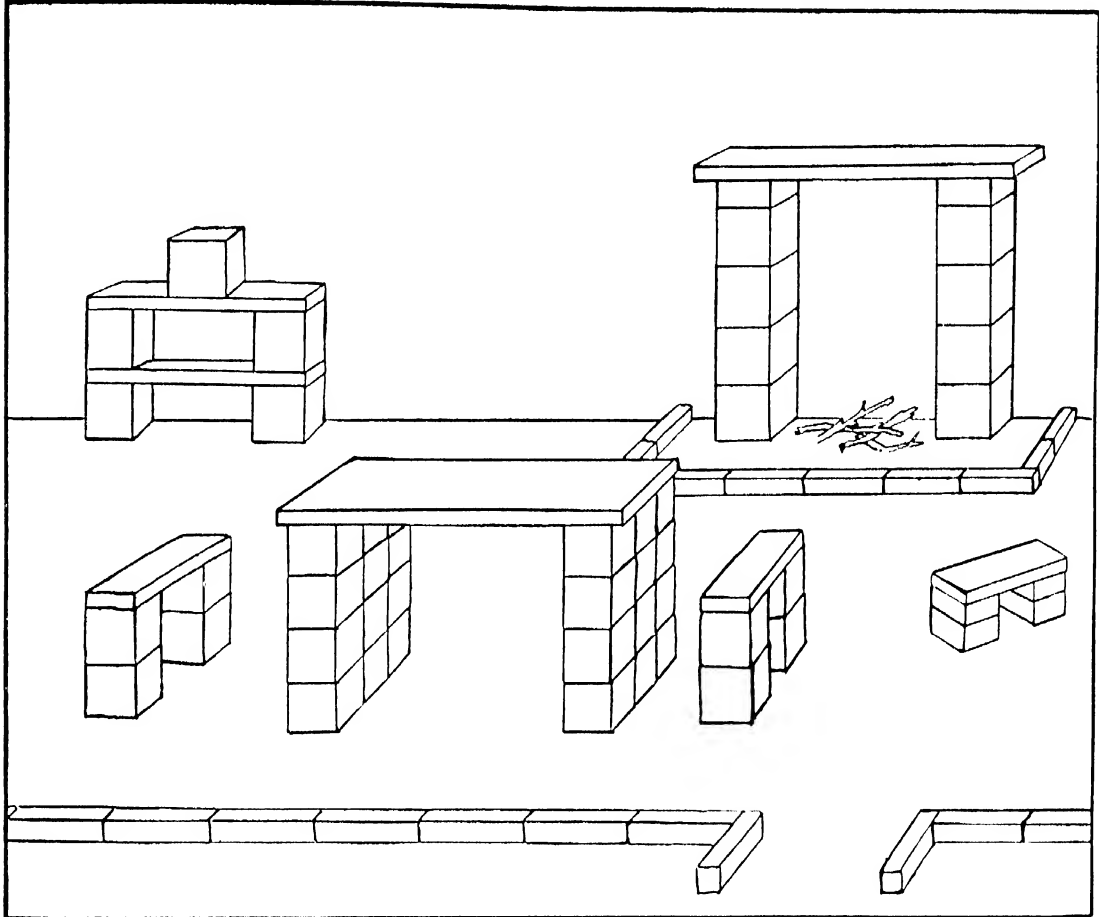


FIG. 3

What children like to build of bricks—A Doll's Room

and obedience if she remembers the following important points—

Have only a Few Rules and Regulations

Imitation and suggestion are enough for little ones; commands should only be used when these fail. But as children progress through the Infant School and Lower Forms

things) carefully when you have finished with them." General rules are of little value, or rules that require different interpretations at different times. To tell little ones that they may talk as long as they do not disturb the class is a difficult rule and somewhat beyond them. If talking does not disturb the work then let the children talk freely. If a silence period is necessary (as it sometimes is in group reading or story telling), the little ones will be quite pleased

to work in silence until their turn for reading or oral work comes.

Be Consistent

Disorder and unrest are the result of a teacher's inconsistency and uncertainty. Children soon notice if sometimes they are allowed to leave things lying about, and sometimes made to put them away, and so on. The demands made on little children should be steady, invariable and *progressive*, so that by much repetition they learn desirable habits. We teach them to read and write by repetition, and by repetition they can learn good personal habits.

The health of the child must also be considered. The naughty child is often the child who is physically not well.

Previous Training of the Child

Some little ones who come from orderly homes have already the foundation of an orderly moral response. Regular physical habits of nourishment and sleep have made them attentive and obedient. But other little ones have already had a "career of carelessness" which results in absent-mindedness. They do not mean to be disobedient, but they cannot respond easily to orderly situations.

Some children there may be who through neglect, lack that sense of security which is derived from love and care. Where maternal ignorance is the cause the teacher may have a difficult task of enlightening the mother.

Only a wise and sympathetic teacher can help the little child of five or six to undo the work of shiftless years, and take on habits of order and self-control. It will be slow work, for he must be led patiently from one step to another, from one small success to yet another. The same cannot be expected from this type of child as from the other type. We must consider the moral capacity of children as carefully as we do their mental, and grade them accordingly.

The teacher should notice *the effect of little ones on each other*. Two children with exactly the same faults often, if allowed to sit or work together, fortify each other's weakness. A change of position is, therefore, beneficial.

Teacher and Child must be Friends

All offences should be regarded as against the child himself, or the group or form, not against the teacher. There should be no personal conflict between child and teacher. Here are two practical examples: (a) A child is behaving in a noisy manner when the teacher is reading or telling a story to the group, the teacher says: "We cannot go on with the story until Jack is quiet." The strong desire of the rest of the group is generally enough to make Jack quiet. If Jack proves a very troublesome little boy, who still wants to make his noise, the teacher might suggest that she will find a room where he can be alone and make as much noise as he likes without disturbing any one until the story is over. (b) If children who ought to be learning to read or write are really wasting their time, they will think it quite reasonable if the teacher says to them: "If you want to go on wasting your time you may, but when the others go out in the garden to play (or go home, as the case may be), you must stay and do the work they are doing now."

A child should never feel he is being punished for disobeying a particular teacher.

An Orderly Room Makes for Good Discipline

Children are very sensitive to their surroundings, and may absorb disorder and irritability both from the teacher and the general atmosphere of the room. Hence the danger of *noisy* rooms.

Unwise Competition

This last point is perhaps the most important of all. We want from the children *wholesome* emotional response, and to get this we must put an end to any forms of *competitions* and *unwise testing*. The nervous strain imposed on little ones who want to pass a test to get on to the next step of their work is sometimes hardly realized. More will be said about this in the Section on Tests. Sometimes the first untruth, the first attempt at misrepresentation, comes because the little one is anxious to please

and to get on, but the spelling lesson is too difficult.

In conclusion, it must be remembered that the great teacher is superior to her equipment, he knows how to establish, in her form room,

the atmosphere of good cheer, unselfishness, and contented work. All these slowly but surely build up the moral fibres of childhood.

More about methods of teaching will be found in the next chapter.



FIG. 4

Mother and Child

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INDIVIDUAL WORK, GROUP WORK AND CLASS TEACHING

WITH very little children, the work must be largely individual. They are at first only learning how to play and work together. The baby of three wants, if he plays trains, to be the guard, the engine, the whistle, and everything in one. During the first few weeks of the kindergarten, the children will be decidedly individualistic, but the free play periods provide conditions for the submerging of these individualistic tendencies into group activities, such as playing house-keeping, playing trains, etc. The children will learn, too, to come together as a *class* for story-telling, music, some games, singing, etc.

The wise teacher, throughout the child's career, will arrange for a combination of class teaching, individual work, and group work. Some of the specimen time-tables given later show how this can be done. Below we point out some of the advantages and disadvantages of the three methods mentioned.

Individual Work

In the method known as individual work, each child works alone, he has a set task to perform himself. The children working in the same room with him may be doing the same kind of work, but they are all at different stages.

In many schools children learn reading and arithmetic wholly through individual work; there is little or no class teaching in these subjects, or even group teaching. This means there must be a great deal of apparatus, carefully planned out step by step, so that each child can work at his own pace and yet cover the ground. It also means the careful testing and checking of each step by the teacher. Children often learn to read very quickly by this method.

The danger of the system seems to lie in the fact that there may not be enough oral work. The children may be learning words without being really conscious of what they mean.

Reading is thinking by means of the printed page, not a technical mastery of words: and a child is not able to get the thought from what he reads until he has a good spoken vocabulary.

Must be Used With Discretion

A child working on the individual method might be able to read fairly fluently before he was six, and might develop a habit of reading a great deal since he can work at his own pace. This would increase his vocabulary, but not his experiences of life, and the meanings he assigned to all his new words would not be very clear cut. Again, unless he is given opportunity and encouraged to use his new vocabulary, it might lead to a confused mental attitude. Moreover, what he reads will not be of a very high level when we consider the kind of readers printed for the little child, and it is open to question whether he would not be better employed if he were with other children listening to fine stories read, and talking about them, getting to know the world out of doors, and finding out about *things*.

It is for this reason that one is inclined to favour the group system of teaching reading. In this we can have children of similar mental capacity together, and talking together over new words and ideas they help each other. One must bear in mind the following fact if one is tempted to organize one's school wholly on individual lines: that children's self-activity is often more *influenced by other children* than by *the teacher*. Children working as a class or group stimulate each other.

The Dalton Plan

The Dalton plan may be described as a method of individual work. It has been worked out in great detail and with a measure of success in many schools. But it is open to all the objections that apply to any individual method. The wise teacher will combine the individual

method with class teaching. She will remember that children often need positive direction; and the undirected pretence of study in the Transition Form or Standard I or II, before the children are capable of independent study, may be the breeding ground of discontent. It is not learning how to read that counts, but learning how to think, how to behave, and how to study. All the study periods and the free

ment of reading power, and for carrying out projects in handwork. To have group work effective, careful attention must be paid to the organization and supervision of the group. The following points are worth keeping in mind.

1. Group work in reading should not be allowed until standards of reading have been developed and are partially fixed. Otherwise, undesirable habits may creep in when the



FIG. 1

The Blacksmith in his Workshop

periods of the growing child should be very wisely directed.

Group Work

In this method the class is divided into two or three groups according to size, for such subjects as oral work, reading, or number. If the class is a small one, and the children are all of the same mental age and capacity, there is, of course no need for this division.

Group work is very valuable for the develop-

ment of reading power, and for carrying out projects in handwork. When a certain number of children show sufficient reading power, they may be allowed to form a small group while the rest of the children are being helped by the teacher.

2. Each child should show a certain amount of self-control before he is allowed to join a group. Some children—perhaps because of lack of early training—need more constant supervision by the teacher, and are at their best when working with her.

3. Children who need special help or opportunity for drill along definite lines can often be grouped together under the leadership of a child who is strong in that particular line.

4. Opportunity to develop leadership should be given to every child. What constitutes good leadership needs to be gradually pointed out by the teacher.

5. The accomplishments of the groups should be carefully checked by the teacher.

Class Teaching

This method is too well known to need any special comments. Class lessons are the most profitable and helpful means of giving the children stories, poetry, and music, and later history and geography.

Free Choice in Work

Very often little ones will suggest the subject of the work, or the lesson. As the children get older they tend to choose (if allowed to choose) their work less wisely, because they over-estimate their powers. Free choice frequently leads to discontent unless the teacher wisely intervenes. This is specially true of some handwork periods.

The important point to remember is that, whatever plan be adopted, the teacher must keep in intimate touch with the mind of the child, and that unless the child's mind is allowed to work naturally, no carefully prepared plans will help the teacher to educate him.

But the teacher need not go off at a tangent and follow every suggestion of the children, so that the lessons have no continuity. As the children grow older, they grow in ability to keep to one purpose. If the lessons are wisely chosen there will, as a rule, be little difficulty in adapting them to the child's suggestions, and also in preserving the sequence of the lesson.

There are sometimes teachers who take no account of the child's own contributions, and who continually teach language, or build reading lessons about situations which, lying far outside the child's experiences, cannot interest him greatly.

Country children who know their father's horses and have seen the blacksmith shoeing

them, will enjoy playing at being the blacksmith, talking about his tools and making them. A picture such as that shown in Fig. 1 can be built up by them, and they will enjoy and understand it. To take a similar lesson with children in a crowded town district, who are not familiar with the blacksmith and his ways, is unwise, unless they are old enough to begin the study of remote or imagined social situations. This point is further dealt with in the section on drawing up the curriculum. In this section carefully graded schemes of work are planned, based first on the suggestions of the little child and then, as he gets older, partly on the suggestions of the teacher as she tries to introduce him to life far away in space and time.

Children Make their Own Suggestions

This is how we get our suggestions from children. A little child, of four or five, comes to school with a pair of new shoes. He is interested in his shoes, and so are the other children; a talk will naturally follow about the shoemaker and his work. They will love to hear a story about a pair of shoes, and the poem about the busy shoemaker—

*"Wand'ring up and down one day,
I peeped in the window over the way;
Putting his needle through and through,
There sat a cobbler making a shoe."
Etc., etc.*

They will want to play at being shoemakers. If one of the children's fathers is a shoemaker plenty of suggestions will follow. Fig. 2 shows the kind of drawing that the teacher can build up on the blackboard, or on paper, at the suggestion of the children. The paper-cutting, modelling, and drawing lessons for the day will probably all be suggested by the cobbler. The teacher would be unwise, if, when all her little ones are interested in shoes, she insisted on giving them lessons on the crocus. Several schemes of work based on the child's interests will be found in the section on curriculum.

The Project Method

It is from the happy free choice that we get the Project Method so much talked about in

America. The term "project" in everyday life is generally used to describe any practical problem, the solution of which requires much consideration, scheming, or planning: that is, the determination of what to do, and how to do it. A school project is very similar. A school project is any practical activity of the children,

have not so much place in the education of the child from two to six. Sometimes, indeed often, an interest arises which, as we have shown, unifies for a time the activities of the kindergarten, but in general it must be remembered that the problems of the little one are individual and the interest span is short. There should,

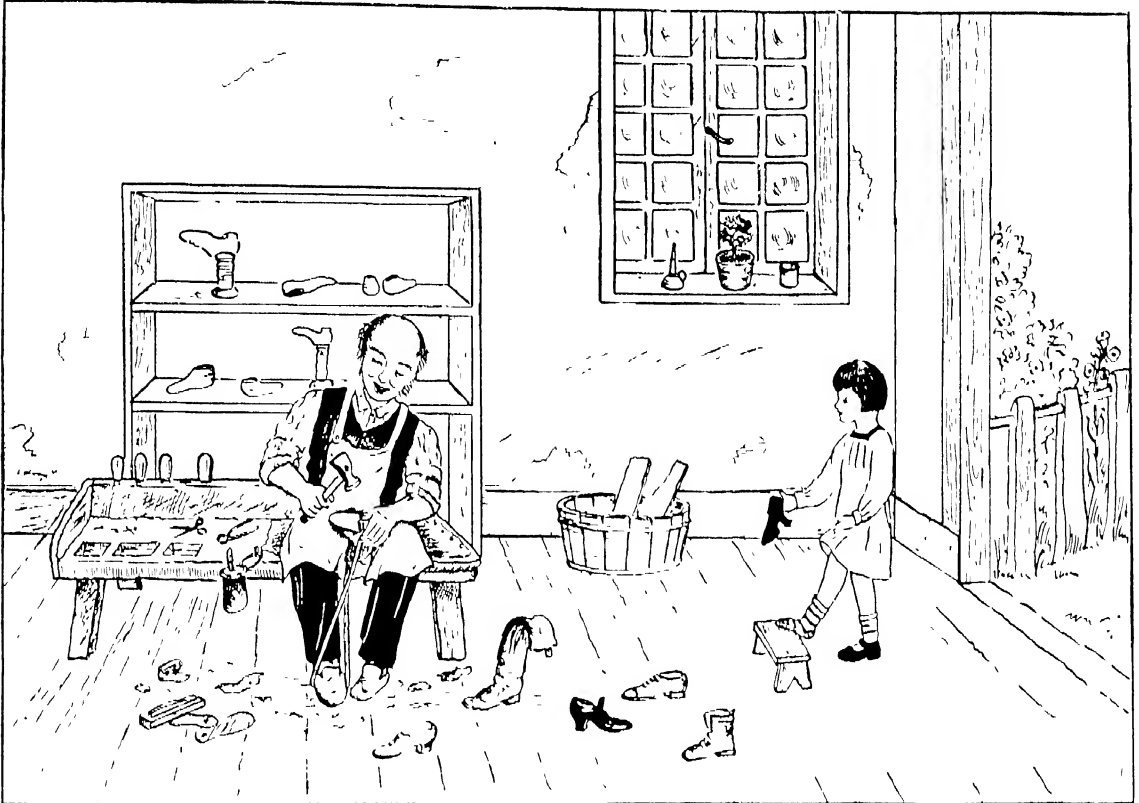


FIG. 2
The Cobbler

To illustrate poem "Cobbler, Cobbler, Mend my Shoe," and the poem "The Cobbler." The window can be cut to open so that the passer-by in the poem can put his head in

which is planned by them and calls for contriving, devising, and scheming in a practical manner. It involves the solving of a *real* problem, not a theoretical one. The little ones who propose, themselves, to make a cobbler's shop, though they will not perhaps be able to accomplish much, are undertaking a project

In some schools the word "project" often signifies some central interest around which all activities are grouped. Large group projects are very effective with the older children, they

therefore, never be any forced correlations, or any attempts to tie up subjects such as reading or writing with anything but the children's spontaneous interests.

As the children grow older they are able, as we have said before, to hold to one purpose longer, and to carry out very successfully group projects in their free periods or handwork periods. In the weekly programmes of work given will be found suggested projects for children of different ages.

THE FIRST YEAR IN SCHOOL

THE teacher in the beginners' Class has special opportunities and responsibilities. She can make school life attractive and interesting so that children want to learn and to go on learning. But if first year experiences are distasteful, future teachers will have the extra burden of arousing them from their apathy and combating negative attitudes. First teachers are also very important because they take the place of mothers during school hours, and are responsible for helping children over the transition from home, where they are often the centre of their little world, to the wider more complicated world of school, where they have to share one adult with many other children. And, during their fifth year, important changes occur in their development. For instance, their relationships with other children become more definite; they begin to seek friends and they long to be accepted as friends by their companions. It is their teacher's responsibility to make opportunities for them to get to know each other and to provide the sort of school life where they can share and learn to understand how other people feel.

The Nature of Five-year-olds

A successful teacher of five-year-olds begins by understanding them. We know that once they get over the strangeness of being in school and away from home, they are helpful, sturdy, and friendly. In many ways, they are independent and like to do things for themselves. If they are not hurried, they can take off their outdoor clothes, hang them on the right hook, change their shoes, look after themselves in the toilet and wash their hands. Dressing, especially in winter time, is more difficult. They need help with their second coat sleeve, with buttons they can't see, with tight Wellingtons and with shoe laces. Tying bows is still hard for the majority. At meal times, many of them cannot manage a knife and there is no need to force them to do so. Meat should always be cut up for five-year-

olds unless they ask to be allowed to do it for themselves. School beginners are often very slow eaters. They need smaller helpings than the rest and should be allowed to take all the time they need.

Their general physical control is good although some of them cannot skip to music until the second half of the year, but they accomplish many domestic tasks efficiently, and they especially like to sweep up, and to clean down tables, to arrange flowers, to tidy shelves and to run messages. Teachers often find them more willing and helpful than six-year-olds. In fact, they are usually called "good" children because they are so amenable, obedient and dependable, giving as little trouble as possible to adults, and exhibiting such attractive traits as perseverance and patience. Sometimes teachers are astonished by their grown-up speech. But this is rather deceptive. One of their chief characteristics is their interest in grown-ups and the things they do. Hence, they love to use grown-up language even though they do not fully understand what they say. We notice that their games of pretence are full of the practical dialogue and comments which adults use as they go about their daily business. Sometimes they use a word, then ask us what it means. They are also great questioners, asking us why and how and "What's it called?" This is because they want to know about all they see, hear and experience. The world of reality is widening for them and school introduces them to more and more complicated problems about the way life is conducted. To a casual observer of five-year-olds, they appear to be well on the way to intellectual and emotional stability.

But they are not so grown up as they seem. If things are made too difficult for them, if they are pressed too hard and in times of particular strain, their assurance breaks down and they reveal the insecurity and babyishness which is just below the surface. During their first weeks in school they may be very brave until something disturbing happens. Then they break

down, crying for home and mother, or kicking and screaming. We have to remember that not long ago they were babies, and that they quickly regress to babyhood when things become unbearable.

to feel that they belong and matter to someone who is stronger and bigger than they are. They look to their teacher for this care and protection when they come to school. Each one longs to be their teacher's *only* child, and tries to get her



FIG. 1

A Display of Anger is often seen in Little Children

Although they can do so much for themselves, they are very dependent on the friendliness and comfort of grown-ups for their general feeling of happiness and well-being. Being small and inexperienced, they are still rather like strangers in an adult world, and they greatly need the confidence and protection which a steady, sympathetic person can give them. They need

attention for himself. They like to be noticed, spoken to individually and always approved of. We notice that five-year-olds speak of "my teacher" not "ours" or "Miss So-and-so," as older children do. And many teachers remark how some children will push others away to get close up to them, and how they resent her taking one child's hand and not theirs. Children do

indeed feel very jealous when they imagine that anyone is getting more attention than they are. They do not yet understand that affection can be shared by all. To them it seems that if their teacher is attentive to one child, she cannot really love another. They all like us to speak to them by their christian names, it is a sign of our affection for them. If we say "John" to one child and "Peter Brown" to another, Peter immediately senses that "she likes John, but she doesn't like me." This makes him feel wretched and unhappy and may lead to misbehaviour. He reasons to himself that he must have done some unknown wrong which has destroyed his teacher's love for him. It is not surprising that five-year-olds will do anything they possibly can to please their teachers. They *must* be approved of and if they feel that we do not like them, their whole school days are clouded. Teachers say that their children love doing sums or reading and so on. But this only means that they like doing whatever their teacher asks of them for it will win them approval.

Children of five are still inexperienced enough to believe that adults are all-powerful and always in the right. Up to 5½ years at least, they do not criticize parents or teachers and often their teachers' ways and opinions are accepted in preference to those of parents. "My teacher does it *this* way," or "my teacher says . . ." are familiar remarks at home. Our "musts" and "must nots," said in firm tones are imperative. In the same way, our comments on their behaviour, "you are good" (or bad) mean to them that they are entirely and thoroughly one or the other. They have exaggerated ideas of goodness and badness and no appreciation of degrees between them. When we call them "good," they are completely happy, but—"You are a bad child," plunges them into misery.

Changes occur towards the end of the year when they are more experienced and when they have learned to depend more on other children and less on adults. Because of their greater power over language, they begin to notice that the "musts" and "must nots" and the "oughts" and "ought nots" of one day are not the same as on others, that they do not apply equally to everybody. They find that we do not know everything; that we are often weak and

unreliable. These discoveries worry them, and many children who have been "good" become restless and troublesome because they feel uneasy and disturbed. At the same time, physical changes are occurring, which add to their discomfiture. Their teeth begin to fall out and this, with other unpleasant discoveries, can be alarming. But all through growth, the human mind has ways of adapting to change. The children who have opportunities to play and talk together, and have toys, and things to do, find support in each other and gradually adapt themselves to the realities they have so painfully discovered.

As we have already noted, five-year-olds have an absorbing interest in people and in what they do, which they express in their zest for games of pretence. No other age is so engrossed in this form of activity. They explore through pretending when they play at being mothers and fathers, policemen, cowboys, shopkeepers, princesses, and so on. They feel themselves into the natures of grown-ups as they imitate the dramatic episodes in other lives. Although they are so small and weak, they can feel the power and glory of holding up the traffic, driving a vehicle, managing a class as their teacher does, and putting out fires. Or they can experience the tenderness of a mother with her baby or the satisfaction of serving a customer. At the same time, they are applying the knowledge which they have gained of life through observation in the only way possible to them. Moreover, in their pretence, they express feelings and fantasies and this is necessary if they are to adapt themselves successfully to real life and for the strengthening of their characters. Teachers need to understand something of the children's world of daydreams (or fantasies) where their wishes are completely satisfied and where nothing interferes with their pleasures. Although daydreaming is a relief to them and a safeguard of mental health (just as it is for adults) they must grow away from this shadow world so that they can absorb reality and find satisfaction in real achievements. This is one of the paths to maturity, and involves a denial by them of their desires in order to become acceptable members of the civilized community in which they have to live. In "pretend play," the makebelieve and

the real world meet and mingle. Fantasy is expressed through real things, words and actions and in real situations. Ideas about the adult world are absorbed into themselves, and because these games are played with other children, or in the presence of other children, the play leads children towards self conquest. They constantly exercise self denial and restraint in order to be accepted as desirable companions by each other. This is a great step forward in their growing up.

Teachers and parents often complain that children of this age are untruthful. This is natural and forgivable when we remember the strength of their fantasies. Sometimes it is impossible for them to unravel what is real from what is "pretend." They tell us about imagined happenings as if they actually took place because they are utterly real to them. Our only course is to accept their confidences without paying too much attention to them, knowing that if there are plenty of opportunities for play and companionship, they will grow out of this phase and eventually learn to sort out the real from the pretend.

We find that this ability comes with their appreciation of themselves as persons. We have to remember that before a child can tell the difference between what he makes up to himself and what he experiences from outside himself, he must realize himself as somebody. As a baby, he has to discover that the feet and hands he sees at the ends of his body belong to him. By the time children come to school, they are familiar with their bodies, e.g. a little girl is conscious that she has curly or straight hair. But the "I" who lives in the body is still unknown. Feelings and desires are, of course, felt and expressed by "I want" and "I feel hungry" or "tired" but "I" is quite undefined and indefinite. Round about their fifth year, when they are so interested in adults' conversation, they begin to notice the remarks we make about them, e.g. "You are big for your age," "You are a clever little boy" or "You are a nuisance." They listen to what we say about them and make inferences about themselves when they are compared with brothers and sisters or other children. So ideas about their personalities accumulate. When they are successful in any way, they are able to add to these beginnings

the knowledge that they are people who can do things. That is another reason why they insist that we recognize and say that what they do is good.

When they fail, they begin to imagine themselves as someone who can't do things. Persistent failure is one of the greatest tragedies in school life. When they get a firm idea that they are no good at anything, they cease to try for success and adopt the attitude, "I won't try, then I can't fail." Teachers must never tire of praising and encouraging, for all their approbation is helping the children to build up self knowledge and self respect. We have to wait at least another two years before self criticism is possible. It is an important part of our work to assist the growth of self respect by providing the children with the means and opportunities of doing the things they can do successfully, as well as by our constant assurance that they are successful. When we set up standards of behaviour and achievement beyond their reach, we deliberately destroy their growing belief in their own powers. We used to think that children should never feel pleased with themselves, now we understand enough about growing up to welcome and encourage every sign of self appreciation. As there is so much that five-year-olds can do successfully without strain or undue pressure, we deliberately plan their school life so that they can feel, "I can," "I am," "I know." As self consciousness and confidence strengthens, they reach out toward greater achievements. So long as they feel inadequate and weak, they are forced to remain dependent and babyish, retreating into their dream world and keeping as safe as they can within the protection of others.

The Needs of Five-year-olds in School

When we know something about the nature of children of a certain age, we realize the sort of experience and conditions that are best suited to their education and development. In the case of five-year-olds, their general needs include —

1. *Companionship of Other Children.* For the first time, many school beginners find themselves with a group of children of their own age and size, talking the same language and with very

much the same interests, and at the time in their development when they want to learn how to live with other people. Their teacher has a splendid opportunity to make the most of this situation for the benefit of each child. Getting on with people is part of their education, and it

stories about their experiences, in fact, mothers say that they "never stop talking." Of course, there are numbers of children who through lack of people to listen to them talk or to talk with them, or because they are less intelligent or have lived in homes where "children are seen and not

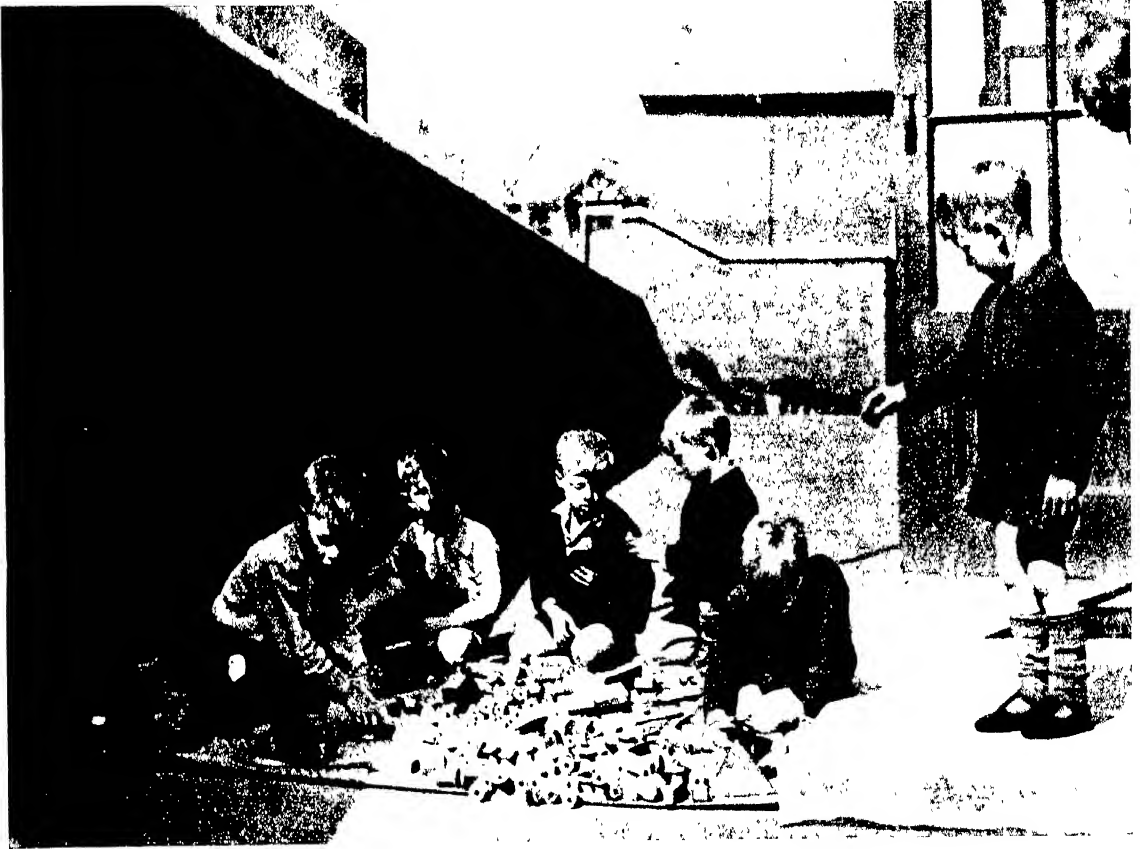


FIG. 2

Small Boys using their Sense-training Apparatus out-of-doors

is recognized now that social development is an important part of school life. They play and work together; chatter freely to each other, share toys and materials and live together as a large family.

2. *Freedom to Talk.* Children of this age are great talkers; they enjoy talking and they love new names. They are ready to use language as a powerful tool for finding out. Thinking is a matter of talking, they reason aloud, they comment about what they do or about what is happening round about them; they tell lengthily

heard," arrive in school with very limited vocabularies. But these children soon show the same capacity for verbal expression if we give them something to talk about and encouragement to talk. They must all talk freely if they are to learn anything in school, and if they are to develop into the self-reliant well-behaved children we wish them to become. The new life in school should stimulate them to talk more than ever before.

3. *The Need to Achieve.* We have already mentioned the reasons why children must feel

successful in school. They feel lost at first, but when they find that they can do something to help their teacher, or when other children choose to play with them, they begin to feel as if they belong to the school; that they have a place in the strange community. We need to take as broad a view as possible about achievement. A child is commended when he succeeds in overcoming his nervousness on the climbing frame as well as when he learns to write his name. Getting a jigsaw puzzle correct is as much an achievement as counting to 20 without a mistake. Giving up a toy to let someone else have his turn, clearing up the floor, doing up his shoes; all are achievements which we should notice and commend.

4. *The Need for Leisure.* The hurry and bustle of modern adult life has no place in a school for little children. The admonition "hurry up" is highly destructive to learning and development. Five-year-olds need longer to do things, they want time to "mess about," to consider about the things they use, they need to linger over their problems, to try things and to make mistakes. In planning our programmes we allow for this need but each individual teacher has to discipline herself to wait for them and to slow down the day's pattern to meet their requirements.

5. *The Need for Inner Well-being.* Feelings have a great deal more to do with early learning and behaviour than knowing. Children who feel contented in school are steady, confident, full of zest for what they do and are the best learners. And all young children learn better because they love their teacher and because they sense that she likes them. The good feeling of being safe and serene comes directly from the teacher's influence. Relationships between her and her children are of the first importance. The teacher's attitude must be one of kind, cheerful, friendliness, but she has also to be firm without being harsh. Children want her to be stronger than themselves, and they also need to feel that she has everything well in control. Uncertainty and indecision on the part of their teacher makes them uneasy, emphasizes their own weaknesses and often leads them into trouble. This is why some teachers who are called "strict" are preferred to those who are "easy." "Strictness"

has no place in the five-year-olds' classroom but definiteness, gentle firmness, and law and order go to make up that security which is absolutely essential to their inner well-being.

6. *The Need for Physical Freedom.* In spite of small rooms, children of this age must be able to move about. Sitting still is definitely harmful and very tiring. Moreover, they cannot live together as companions if they do not share one another's activities, and they cannot take their own time, talk freely, discover what they want to know and spend time watching unless they are able to move about their room. Independence is impossible when they have to sit still. The youngest children need the greatest area of floor space and those responsible for providing accommodation should do everything possible to provide the most suitable classroom for them. It is better to remove obsolete cupboards, even tables and chairs to provide floor space, and if necessary use corridors, porches and cloak-rooms for storage purposes so that the maximum physical freedom is possible in the classroom.

7. *The Need for Healthy Living.* Plenty of light, as much sunshine as possible, and fresh air and rest are needed. Many rooms are dingy with windows which are too high up or do not open. Teachers cannot alter these inadequacies but they can make the best of what they have. Everything we can do to secure pleasant conditions for ourselves and the children means greater response, happier relationships and a more cheerful atmosphere. No detail is too trivial for attention. School caretakers must be warned to mend sashes and to clean floors. Every opportunity for outdoor activity must be fully used. Five-year-olds need their own arrangements, in the classroom if there is no other accommodation, for washing when necessary and before meals. It is quite uncivilized to allow them to spend a long school day without the refreshment of at least one wash and brush up. Three jugs and bowls on a low table, a pail for dirty water and a trolley on which to hook the individual towels and which can be wheeled out-of-doors for airing, are quite sufficient for 35 children.

Most five-year-olds need a short period of complete rest and relaxation during the day, at least in their first six months. Folding stretcher

beds, similar to those used in the nursery class should be available and, in fine weather, the children should arrange them out of doors. Lack of space makes this complete rest impracticable in many schools and some sort of compromise must be made. Rugs on the floor in a dimmed classroom is better than "heads down on the desk." A quiet time with picture books is better than nothing.

It is part of the teacher's job to see that

home life, to settle down happily in school, and gradually to adapt themselves to the life of a large group.

2. To introduce them to wider interests in a more complicated environment.

3. To encourage them to talk clearly, freely and fluently.

4. To show them the place of the "3 R's" in everyday life and to challenge their need and desire to learn how to read and write.

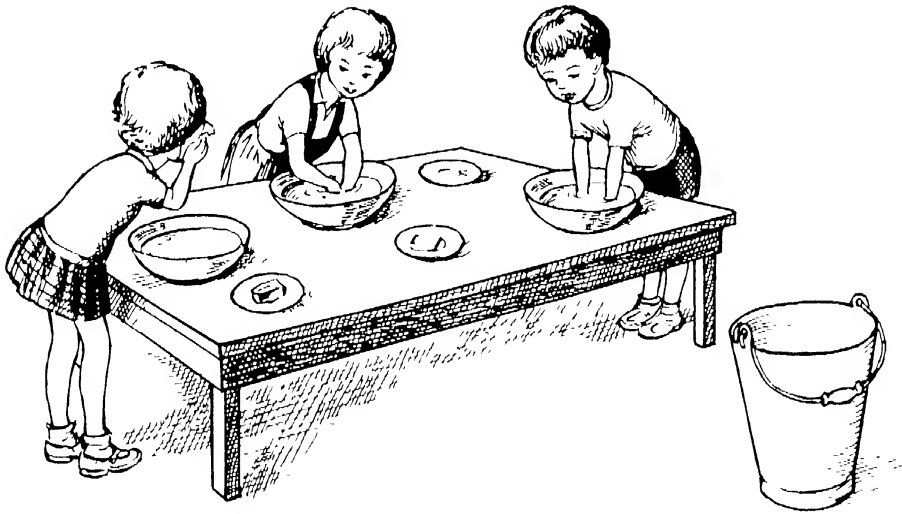


FIG. 3

*Improvised Washing Arrangements in the Classroom
for Five-year-old Children*

children are comfortable while they are in her care. A good deal of so-called naughtiness is avoided when we are sensitive to and do what we can to meet their individual needs. Being too hot or too cold can produce bad temper and inattention. Cold feet in wet shoes are most uncomfortable. Sleeves that are too long, get in the way, messy jobs, however attractive, are eschewed if there are no overalls for fear of the children getting into trouble at home for soiling clothes. Attention to these small but important matters is well repaid.

The Teacher's Aims

The aims of the teacher of five-year-olds can be summarized in the following way—

1. To help them to accept the change from

Settling Down in School

To-day, thoughtful teachers do what they can to soften the break between leaving home and coming to school. Whenever possible, arrangements are made so that the nearly-fives are not when they enter the school altogether strangers to school life. For instance, in small rural schools, the four-year-olds are sometimes invited to the Christmas party or to a "play afternoon." In other schools, parents of future school beginners are invited to meet the Head teacher during school hours and to look round the classrooms and talk to the teacher of the five-year-olds. Arrangements for rest, meals, changing shoes, drying wet clothes are explained and the parents are invited to supply such things as a clean towel on Monday morning, a shoe bag and an apron for dirty jobs. The

children themselves go with their mothers to look at the lavatories and cloakrooms and then they play in their future classroom with the school toys. This is an experience which will enable them to look forward with confidence to their first day. The Head teacher invites questions from the parents and she notices what they say about their children. She also finds this a good opportunity for summing up the different attitudes of parents to their children. Such knowledge is a great help in understanding any behaviour difficulties which show themselves during the first months. She will discover who are the worried, harassed mothers, the over-protective, the self-opinionated, the domineering, the indifferent, the calm and sensible, and the understanding. All these attitudes to life will leave their mark on the character and behaviour of the children.

Later on, when they have been in school for a few months and feel quite at home, it is a good plan to have an open day for the parents and to let the children welcome them to their classroom and display some of their activities. Then the parents can see how their children are settling down and what they are doing. The teacher can also clear up any point which has puzzled them. This is another opportunity for discussion between teacher and parent when both learn more about the children from different angles.

It is a great mistake to accept a large group of newcomers, without any preparation, and all on the same day. We can imagine, even if we have not experienced, the bewilderment of 40 panic-stricken children as screaming and crying spreads from the terrified few to the vaguely apprehensive. The one or two adults in charge are too harassed and physically powerless to comfort them all, and the mothers may go away in a very worried state. It is, at least, a very bad beginning. To avoid this not more than six or eight should be received in any one week. Two or three is even better.

An important advantage of admitting small groups is that mothers can come right into the classrooms and stay with their children for the first few mornings until the children feel fairly settled. On the first day, the mother is invited to take the children round the room to look at the materials. The more established members

of the class come forward and ask the newcomer to "come and play" or to see what they are doing.

Most newcomers, however, prefer to watch for a while before they plunge into activity. They follow the teacher's movements carefully. When they see her at the homely friendly job of helping someone into an overall, threading a needle for a little girl, or tying the ribbon on another's hair, they are reassured. The mother wants to know when she should go. "When you feel you ought," answers the teacher, "but say good-bye first." It is unwise to advise mothers to slip away when the child is not looking. They will feel tricked and upset when they discover that they are alone. It is better to give them the chance to accept the reality of the situation by explaining, "Now I'm going home to get on with the washing but I'll be back for you this afternoon." In a few days' time, most children say "I'm all right. You needn't come in with me now."

The teacher's first job is to get the children to feel that they are welcome in school, that she wants them there, and will take care of them. Of course, this welcome depends largely on the happy atmosphere which prevails in the room. Colour and bright playthings attract the newcomers. So does the teacher's easy smile and her cheerful voice. Also, there are the familiar sounds of children playing.

Next, the teacher must get to know the new children and to make it easy for them to make friends with the more experienced children. She must encourage their confidence. For example

1. They are shown their hooks for outdoor clothes, labelled with their names in bold letters. Just knowing "this is mine," "this is my place" and "this is my name" gives them the feeling of being at home in school and being someone that matters.

2. Each one is given a box, bag or very strong envelope for their private possessions. The teacher shows them where to keep these containers and how to find them for themselves by looking for their names. For many children this is the first time that they have had a place of their very own. Inside the container they should find a book of plain paper, a thick pencil and a box of crayons so that they always have

something to do. But primarily, the containers are for their own things.

3. At a convenient time, e.g. story time, the teacher begins to establish good relations between the beginners and the rest, by letting them all know the names of the new children and where they live, and by telling them something interesting about each one. They all look

The Teacher's Attitude

It is most important to accept these newcomers *as they are*. We must beware of trying to fit any child into a preconceived idea of what we think a five-year-old should be like, or what he should know or do. Each child is himself, and though he is like other five-year-olds in

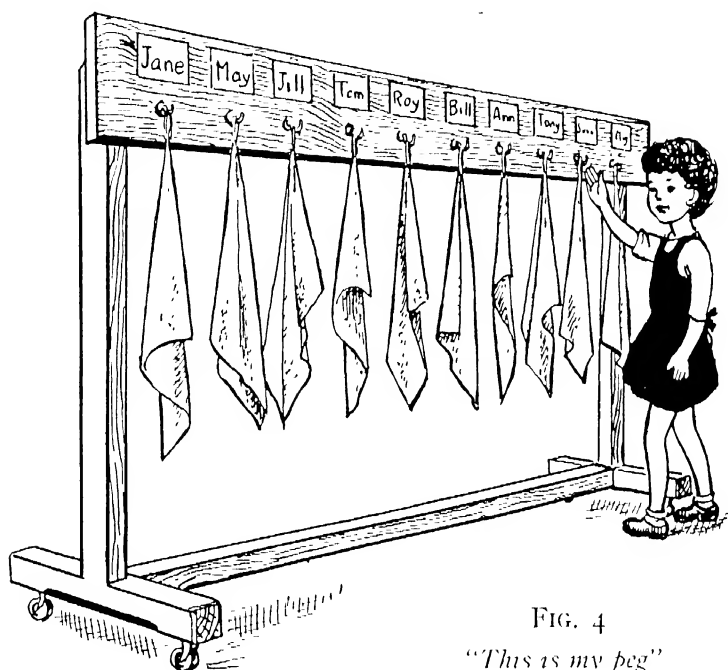


FIG. 4
"This is my peg"

at the new names on the different belongings in case anyone needs help in finding them. Someone offers to show the newcomers what to do as the activities change during the day. "Be sure that you get your milk," is a reminder which the teacher should give.

4. After the first week or two, the beginners are given a classroom job to do, so that they get the feeling of being important. This establishes their place and right in the school world and encourages in them a sense of responsibility. The tasks, however, must be well within their capacity for this first success must be achieved easily, e.g. tidying the shop or cleaning the play house.

In the foregoing are given, very briefly, the main factors which in some measure determine a teacher's approach to the problem of taking in newcomers, and of providing those conditions which experience has shown are helpful to children.

certain ways, he is in others different. This is because he has certain characteristics which are entirely individual, and because his pre-school experience belongs to him alone. Inheritance and experience have made him what he is, and although we may understand five-year-olds generally, we must watch for signs which tell us about each one's personality. We may be aware of the needs of all children of this age, but each child has his own special needs which we try to discover and then to satisfy.

Instead of trying to force them into a pattern of the "good" child, we help them to grow up so that they can fit into the modern civilized community without sacrificing their own gifts and individualities. Instead of blaming the child for so-called "naughtiness" we must look for causes preparatory to attempting to reach any decision. Then remedies will present themselves.

Types of "Difficult" Behaviour and Suggestions for Handling "Difficult" Children

1. *The Spoilt Child.* "Spoilt" children are those whose wishes and pleasures have been over-indulged at the expense of ordinary, common-sense frustration dictated by the demands of reality. They meet with great disappointment and are bewildered in school for they find that what they want seems quite unimportant to us. It is most difficult for them to reorganize their five years of accepting themselves as the centre of the world, and until they do so, they cannot correct their behaviour. Teachers must recognize their difficulty and give them help and firm support. Very often, other children can help them more than we can. They find that, if they want to be allowed to play with the rest, they have to control their own desires. When they snatch things away from others, they are cold shouldered or they meet with physical and verbal retaliation. Teachers, however, can tell them what *not* to do in order to be accepted into a group. "You must not . . ." or "you have to do . . ." or "you are not allowed . . ." They also need suggestions on how to make friends and how not to antagonize others. "Ask if you can have it," we say, when they snatch things or, "Help Mary. Fetch her so and so. She'll like you then." Above all, we must avoid blame because it makes their difficulties so much worse. Spoilt children are already muddled and distressed and have a great deal to re-learn. We do not add shame and guilt to their burdens. Instead, we show them that we are friendly and we warmly approve each social success and every denial by them of their own wishes. Every day these children respond to fresh impressions which gradually influence them towards better behaviour because they are understanding more clearly what is required of them.

2. *Over-anxious Children.* These are the children who are unduly upset by anything new and unfamiliar or by anything directly contrary to expectation. They are tearful and discontented. Sometimes they refuse to speak. It is usually worthwhile to have a talk with the parents in order to discover the cause of their

unhappiness. Very often they have been told that they will read when they get to school or do sums. Perhaps the parents have expressed their disapproval of some aspect of the school day. Whatever the reason may be the children feel that somehow it is their fault that the school isn't doing what parents think is right. If there is criticism because formal lessons are postponed, it will help the children to give them a picture and naming book to keep in their boxes and to let them "read" from it each day until they can adapt their ideas to reality.

3. *Aggressive Children.* It is usually anxiety and fear which make children aggressive. They interfere with others, are destructive, noisy and generally make nuisances of themselves. It is often extremely difficult to discover what they are afraid of and why they are anxious. As a rule the cause goes back to pre-school years. Some have been brought up to believe that they are very naughty and are in constant fear that dire retribution will fall on them one day. It is easy to understand that they think that the expected punishment may come somehow to be linked with or come from this strange, new place. They get tensed up and break things to relieve their feelings, they imagine that the dreaded punishment may be hidden within the object they break, they even feel, as adults do at times, that it would be better to do something so that the worst happens in order to get it over and be done with. Very often, these children have strong feelings which frighten them when they are playing with others. They feel that they may hurt children as they hurt and break up toys. So they do something outrageous in order to get themselves separated from other children.

Nagging or blame is useless as it brings to the child a feeling of despair of ever being "good." We help them best by letting them feel our friendliness and our strength. A firm teacher, who is also gentle and cheerful, enables these children to feel safe from themselves. When they interfere seriously with others who cannot deal with the situation themselves, we must protect the sinner, as well as the sinned against, because we stand for law and order and must give wisely of our judgment and maturity. We have to show the aggressors that we are strong enough to prevent them doing harm; it is very

disturbing if we sound weak and uncertain. "You must *not* do so and so," must be spoken with conviction if we are to guide their behaviour and to protect and support them all. The thought that "she will stop me doing wrong" is a great help to better behaviour.

We also help them to improve by noticing and approving every small act of co-operation, by giving them jobs to do, and by choosing them for roles during dramatic activities (especially those which represent the strong and powerful, e.g. Father Bear, the King, etc.). Some tools and materials provide splendid outlets for them, e.g. scissors and saws which are used for construction as well as destruction, hammers which allow hitting wood yet doing no harm. Activities like painting and modelling are excellent for expressing disturbed and powerful feelings. "He who forms artistically in turn forms himself."

4. *Wild Behaviour.* Many teachers know how some five-year-olds suddenly "go mad," rush boisterously around, and behave generally in a reckless and upsetting way. This kind of behaviour is caused by sudden surges of excitement and is common among children of this age. If conditions allow, they should be permitted to "let off steam" in the playground and return when they have dissipated their energy. Otherwise, we have to interfere, but with cheerful sympathy, suggesting a job that takes the offenders out of the room and round the school. This has a sobering effect without making them feel guilty.

5. *Teasing.* This must not be allowed. Sometimes it is sufficient to forbid it and explain that it "makes children unhappy." If this fails, alternative occupations are suggested but the offender should be given a chance to improve by making his own decision. Told that "You can stay here and play with John and stop teasing or you can . . ." usually results in the child saying "I'll stay here, I won't do it again." Sometimes, he selects the alternative, goes to sit alone and thinks it over. Then, without a word, he returns to his former companion and plays peaceably. Five-year-olds who torment others in this way, have themselves invariably suffered similarly at the hands of adults.

6. *Children who do not Play.* Children who sit alone, hugging one familiar toy, not playing

and hardly speaking, are very puzzling. If they have just come to school, they may be using all their energy in keeping their end up in the strange environment and so cannot express themselves through play. They may feel safe only with a certain cuddly toy and will not venture away from the familiar, or they may not know what to do with the playthings. There are children who have lived so unnaturally before they come to school, that they have no experience of common toys. One little boy who had spent most of his waking life tied to furniture in a top flat (to prevent him making a noise) shook his head and murmured "I canna'" to every plaything he was offered.

If children are just shy and diffident, they are best left to themselves. They will eventually come into the open when they are sure no one is watching. Those who persist in their isolation may be lonely children who do not know how to make friends or, because of previous experience, they may be suspicious of strange people and things. Many of those whose speech is under-developed will not understand our advances. Whatever the cause, the friendly atmosphere, the materials and the other children will gradually win their confidence. Water usually attracts even the shyest. It is a good plan to arrange the water play or the doll's wash near to the child and to let other children play round with it. From being an interested observer, the shy child so far forgets herself that she joins in. Children do the rest. Sand is the other material favoured by the retiring children. But it is useless to force them to the bin, the bin and the children playing with the sand have to be brought near to them. Experts have agreed that no good comes of forcing children into activity. If no improvement takes place after several months, the child should be seen by a psychologist.

7. *Unsettled Children.* Children who are restless and will not concentrate for any length of time are often those who have been insecure at home or whose play has been constantly interrupted. They usually wander about a great deal and, in answer to our suggestions that they do so and so, repeat "I don't want to." Instead of using their hands, they often pretend to be cars and engines, continually moving around

and making appropriate noises, they are more like three-year-olds. Patience is needed until they have worked through this interest. Any small achievement, such as climbing successfully on apparatus, must be made much of, and they should be encouraged to use large lumps of well worked clay. At first they will only pummel and pound but their teacher sits by them, shows them what else to do, and encourages other children to join in. As soon as they get a feeling of power over material, they begin to improve. They sit longer with their clay and make greater efforts to produce something recognizable. Once a feeling of achievement has been experienced, they have an incentive. Their attention and effort then improve.

The teacher's job is to watch for the appearance of some object to emerge, to commend the attempt and to display or use it in order to emphasize the child's pleasure.

8. *Children who Make no Effort* These children are sometimes called "lazy" and are very difficult to understand. But the fault is not theirs. In babyhood, they have met with disappointment and frustration so often that they have long ago ceased to make any effort. They may have been left unnoticed day after day in their prams; they may have been bottle fed; the bottle may have continually slipped from them and no one came to thrust it back. Perhaps they cried and struggled but at last gave it up. Soon "giving up" became their pattern of behaviour and the urge to effort died. Of course, some children may be "lazy" because of ill health but the cause of consistent lack of effort generally is far more deep-seated. We can help them by seeing that they develop ordinary habits of attention through play. Their first success may come from pleasure in physical activity on an immature level, e.g. messing with sand and water, building up and knocking down, banging nails into wood. Their efforts strengthen when they begin to assert themselves with some material. As they improve, they usually take an interest in other children's building and in what they do in clay and then begin to join in. Later on, they can be encouraged to do things for themselves and eventually advance to simple jigsaws. If we do not provide materials and opportunities for their development in this

class, they are later likely to become typical school failures who "do not try" and "are not interested."

Introducing Them to a Wider World

Knowing what children are like at five years old, keeping in mind their needs, and after considering how we should help them to adjust to school, we have now to plan the life within school walls. This life should not be entirely strange. In some ways, it resembles the life at home. There are meal times, playthings, rest times, there is someone who will do things for them and who will answer their questions. In other ways, the school should be a more interesting place than most homes. It will, of course, be a bigger and much more complicated world.

Round about five, children are ready for the greater horizons and more adventurous experiences which school can offer. Like so many creatures in the stories we tell them, they are eager to be off "to seek their fortunes." We fail them if we allow our classrooms and the life within to be dull and uninteresting. They are full of vitality, intensely curious, talkative, friendly and highly responsive. How shall we meet their challenge?

A Lively Classroom

First, we plan a classroom for living in, and one which represents a children's world. This does not mean that everything will be easy. On the contrary, this world will be a place where realities have to be faced and one which reflects many aspects of the adult world. But it will be one which children can manage and, to a large extent, control. They will be able to change, order and disorder and to use what they find there for their own purposes.

The Furniture

Whether the classroom is furnished with chairs and tables or desks, their formation must not be set and unalterable. Rows of dual desks which never change are evidence that life in such a classroom is dull and uninteresting. At the beginning of the day, the seats may be

grouped so that four, six, or eight children sit together, but as the various activities proceed, the desks are moved about to provide greater floor space or larger surfaces. The children move them about themselves, when the teacher requires the children in a group near her for stories, or because they want to build on the floor or to play at weddings. This is one way in which the children themselves are able to control their own classroom. If the room is overcrowded, it is wise to get rid of some of the desks and to use mats for floor activities. Trestle tables which can be put up and taken down are even better. In new schools, the classrooms are furnished with tables of various shapes, some circular, some square and some long and narrow so that the children can choose the best surface for their different jobs. Chairs may be found anywhere; they are scattered wherever the children need them or stacked away outside the door if they are in the way.

Every modern classroom is equipped with a low heavy bench for simple woodwork, low wall blackboards, fixed at a suitable height for standing up to, and low shelves along one or two walls for display purposes. Under these shelves are open racks for boxes of materials. The teacher's table is small and her blackboard is portable, light and smaller than traditional boards, and made so that children can see easily from their low chairs or from the floor rugs. The shelves for displaying picture books are most important. So also is that part of the wall which is used for picture displays. Pictures which are arranged above the level of the children's eyes are hardly noticed by them.

Materials

Furniture is but the bare bones of classroom equipment. The children need things to do, to observe, to experiment with and to ask questions about. It is materials, (including playthings, tools, games, constructive media, books) which give life and meaning to the classroom. Five-year-olds do not need sets of primers or exercise books, but they do want materials which serve their many and varied purposes. They want the use of things which have to be shared, substances which need the disciplined use of the

hand, and stuff from which they can create situations. They cannot co-operate together or talk to one another without things and situations to talk about.

Choosing Materials

There must be great flexibility in the choice of materials. Each teacher has to select what she needs for her particular class. There are some things which every group will require, but in different neighbourhoods the children want to represent the particular experiences which their environment offers. Some classes will need reading and writing materials; others, consisting mainly of children from bookless homes, will have no use for them. Perhaps these children will want shops instead. A larger number of one sex means a more generous supply of certain tools. Nursery toys may be necessary for one group, but if the majority of the class have come from a good nursery school, the children will look for something more advanced.

Some materials come and go as interests grow and wane. This is particularly true when there is little storage place. There may be a shop one week which may change to a house the following week. These transformations show the vitality of the classroom life and reflect the development of the children. Sometimes, the enthusiasm of a few children results in toys being lent to the school, i.e. engines for a railway, lorries for a street.

The following suggestions include permanent equipment for all classes.

The "Brick" Box. This is a large box which holds building material of all kinds, small and large blocks, flat pieces of ply wood, lengths of broom handle and dowelling, various sizes in boxes and tins, especially cylindrical oddments from the carpenter's shop, cable drums, etc.

Sand. A good supply, damp enough to build with, in a deep large bin preferably on castors so that it can be wheeled out-of-doors.

Material for Modelling. Clay is the best, kept in an airtight tin and wrapped in a damp flannel when not in use. The "clay table" is covered with American cloth and a "clay mat" (usually made of sacking) is put underneath the

table. It can be shaken out in the playground where the bits of dried clay can do no harm. The children use large lumps on wooden boards. Sacks of clay in powder form are quick and easy to work up with the addition of a little water. "Plasticine" is more expensive, not so good to touch or to fashion things with, and soon gets smelly and dirty. If this must be used, the children should have big pieces.

An alternative is paper pulp which is made by the children. To make the pulp tear newspaper into small pieces, soak it well, pour off the surplus water then mix well with a little paste or size. This material is suitable for large modelling and can be painted when dry.

Dough made with flour, plenty of salt, a little size or paste and water is an excellent medium for "cooking" play, or for modelling things for shops. It can be painted when dry.

Wood. All oddments of soft wood are useful for hammering into, for sawing and for simple construction. They are kept together in the "wood box."

The Ragbag. This is important and contains dressmakers' oddments of all kinds. Coloured cottons are needed, but thicker than sewing thread.

Water in a large bath or a zinc-lined trough with bottles, tins, funnels, sieves, rubber tubing, spoons, etc.

Discarded Material. A large box containing used cartons, spools, pieces of cardboard, another box containing newspaper, corrugated card, transparent paper, tissue paper, paper of all sorts.

A box with compartments to hold small objects for constructional play, e.g. corks, reels, buttons, shells.

Painting and Drawing Materials. Five-year-olds should use thick black pencils, e.g. "Black Beauty" (Rowney) and thick bright crayons which do not smudge, e.g. "Freart" or "Finart" both small and giant sizes.

Scribbling Paper. Any oddments will do.

Shapes to draw round, fill in and cut round, e.g. animal shapes in wood or card, thick card or wood letters and figures.

Scrapbooks. For these paste, illustrated magazines and catalogues for cutting out are necessary.

Large and Small Beads. Metal-ended threaders will be required.

Pattern-making Games. Assorted jigsaws, pegboards, tablets, mosaics.

Playhouse. Equipment made from boxes, a tea-set, bed, pram, dolls, cleaning materials, bath, bed and dolls' clothes. A toy cooking stove, if possible.

Dressing-up Box. This should contain old skirts, pieces of material for cloaks, wedding garments, old hats, coloured handkerchiefs, feathers, belts, handbags, shopping bags, jewellery and finery of all sorts.

Books. (See list under *The Challenge to Read and Write*, p. 180.)

Skittles. Useful for target and throwing games.

Shop Play. A set of scales and weights, boxes of stones and other waste materials for weighing, cardboard money, also tin lids for holding shop goods.

Aprons should be provided for painting or dirty play.

In rooms with space, oddments for big constructions are required, e.g. sacks, sacking, apple and orange boxes, large cable drums, old wheels, laths, etc.

Tools. For use with most materials tools are necessary and they must be the best we can get for children's use. Scissors must be sharp, saws must not bend, needles should have big eyes and be sharp enough to go through stuff. For a class of 35 children, 6 pairs of scissors, 6 small well balanced hammers, 2 tenon saws, 1 pair of pliers and a gimlet are necessary, also modelling tools, e.g. flat and pointed sticks, skewers, lumps of wood for pounding, pastry cutters, an old knife. For sand play children will need scoops, moulds, "patters," etc.

Joining-up Materials. It is important to provide different kinds of joining materials, for the sticking or putting-together problem is one which five-year olds are constantly trying to solve. Examples include—

Large-headed nails, $\frac{1}{2}$ in., 1 in., $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., 2 in.,
tintacks.

Pins, paper clips.

String, wire, raffa.

Drawing pins, safety pins.

Paste, gum and glue.

Gummed strip, transparent sticky tape.

A Selection of Materials for the Small Group

In Infant Rooms where children of five, six, seven and even eight are taught together, some compromise must be made. It is usual to provide tables or shelves in a certain part of the

5. Clay or "Plasticine."
6. Pictures to cut out, paste, brushes and plain paper "books" for sticking in.
7. Needles, thread and rags.
8. Boxes of miniature toys, bricks, buttons, shells, sticks.
9. Tray of damp sand and sand tools.
10. Sand out-of-doors.
11. Water trough and water toys.
12. Play house and equipment.

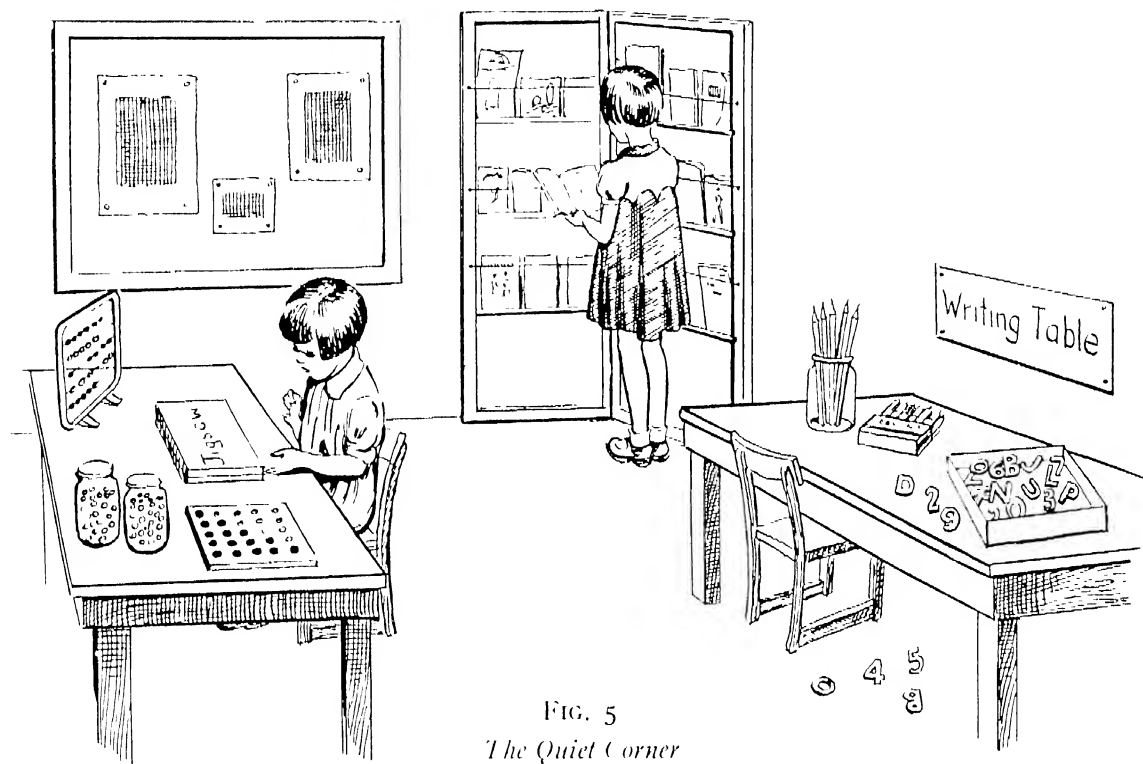


FIG. 5
The Quiet Corner

room to hold the materials for the special use of the fives when the others are busy with lessons.

The following suggestions have been found useful—

1. Writing, drawing and scribbling materials, e.g. a large blackboard, chalks, crayons, pencils, plain paper, tracing paper, cut-outs.

2. Animal insets, templates, card figures and letters.

3. Jigsaws, pegboards, mosaics, coloured tablets, beads.

4. Picture-matching games, including picture lotto and picture dominoes.

13. Oddments for setting up shop, and cardboard money.

The Outdoor Classroom

The playground should be used as much as possible and, if properly equipped, can provide a large extra classroom in good weather. All sorts of possibilities present themselves to the imaginative teacher. Discarded builders' bricks, motor tyres, stout boxes, planks, a ladder, a small wheelbarrow, trucks made out of boxes and old wheels are all excellent. Ideally there

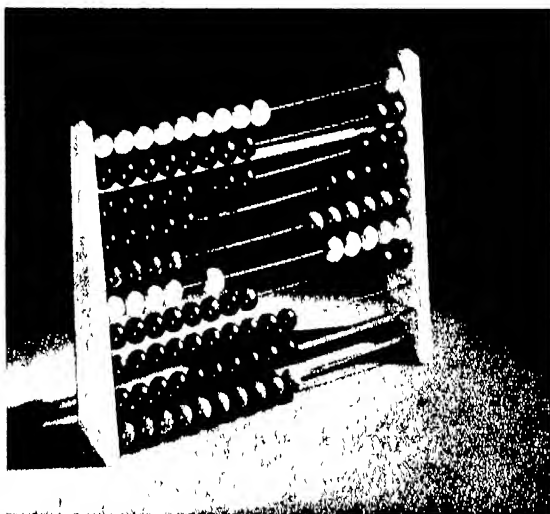
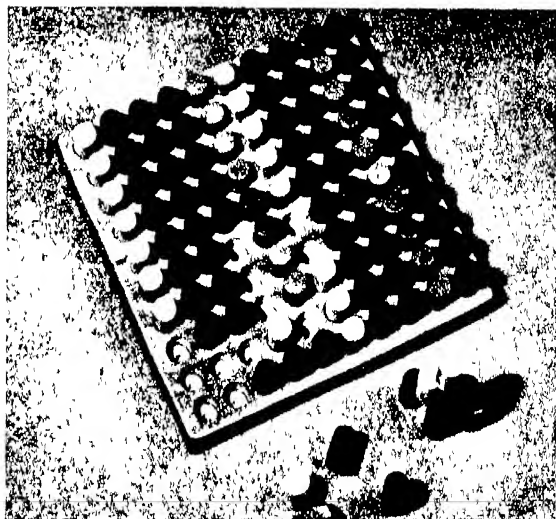
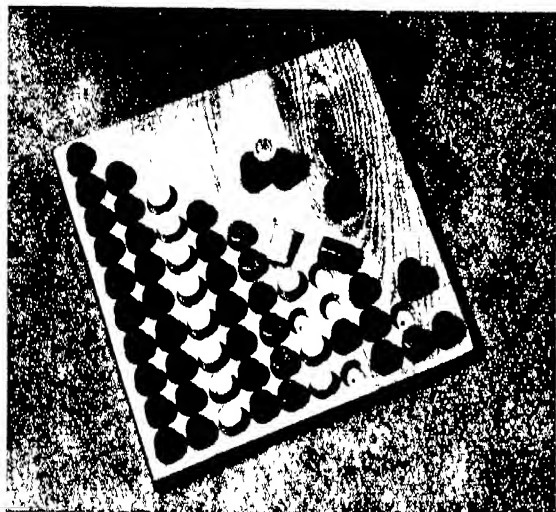


FIG. 6
Sense-training Apparatus

should be sand and water for use out-of-doors as well as somewhere to climb. Expensive apparatus is not necessary; a climbing frame can be made locally, and boxes can be arranged for jumping on and off. The five-year-olds should have their own garden; if this is not possible they can grow flowers in boxes and tubs outside the classroom windows. Some schools have playhouses out-of-doors. They may be made of straw bales, or of old timber given

If we were given an entirely empty room and this material, how would we arrange it to the best advantage? We should want to make the room as attractive as possible while remembering that the children's convenience is all important. We avoid keeping materials tucked away in the big cupboard, because anything not seen is forgotten and so not used. Display is most important. Here are a few suggestions for grouping and display.

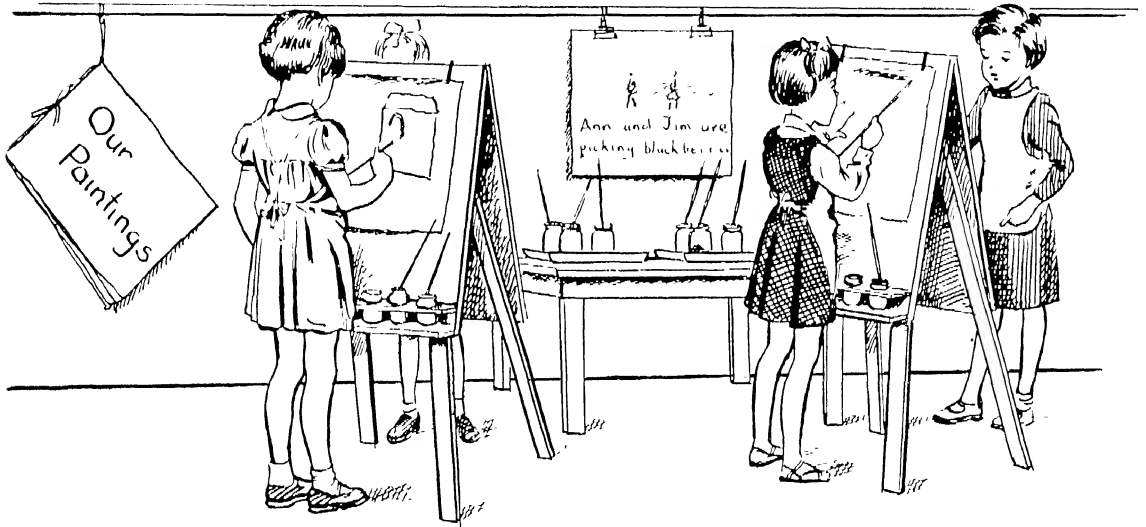


FIG. 7

The Painting Group

by interested parents. Some are converted air-raid shelters.

Note. Equipment for games, e.g. balls and ropes are dealt with in Vol. V.

Arranging the Classroom

Materials must be arranged in an orderly fashion. Although everything is accessible and can be moved by the children and nothing is fixed, the equipment is grouped and everything has its place to which it is returned after use. This is important because it enables the children to live more creatively by making better use of everything. It also helps them to feel settled and at home when they find things in familiar places. The encouragement of order and good habits should result in an economy of the teacher's time and effort.

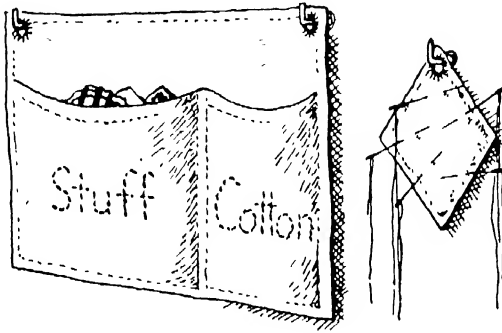
The Quiet Corner

It is good organization to keep part of the room for the less noisy occupations. Here we find the bookshelves, the picture panels, the writing table and the shelf of quiet games, i.e. pattern-making games, and jigsaws. The picture panels are merely parts of the wall where pictures are displayed, at the children's height. If the classroom walls will not take pins, panels of beaver or asbestos board are hung up to take the pictures. The writing table should compel attention by its attractive display of boxes of odd paper, tracing paper, a jar of coloured pencils, trays of crayons, boxes of cut-outs, outline drawings for tracing, and wooden letters and figures. The quiet-games shelf should not be overcrowded. The children can easily see what there is to take, and they have no difficulty in putting things back in their places.

A group of tables or desks is arranged conveniently near so that those who want to be quiet are not interrupted.

The Painting Group

Several easels with paper arranged on both sides are probably in use. On a low trolley, table or low shelf, the materials are grouped and look especially colourful. Trays hold the jars



The Ragbag and Sewing Materials

These should be displayed on the wall near the playhouse; many little girls like to sit and sew as they play at housekeeping. An attractive pincushion holds needles and pins and a special pair of sharp scissors, kept for stuff, is not forgotten.

If there is a shop, it is a good idea to keep it near the playhouse because the children constantly wish to buy goods for use in the house.

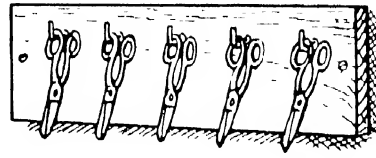


FIG. 8

Sewing Materials easily accessible to Children

of bright powder colour, extra brushes are in a clean jar, (hairs up), and mops for cleaning up accidents are hanging on hooks by the children's painting overalls. A wall book containing finished paintings hangs nearby.

The "Making" Table or Shelf

This is the children's name for the collection of boxes and oddments, tools and joining-up materials which are near to the bench and not far from the "clay" table. Scissors hang on hooks, hammers between a couple of nails, saws and other tools are slipped in a rack. Hanks of string and coloured raffa hang on nails, and twists of wire and other joining materials are found in small boxes on the shelf. Small bottles containing paste and gum are included, and the "paper" and "card" boxes are not far away. This grouping keeps the children more in one place, makes for a steadier atmosphere, and encourages longer concentration. Five-year-olds are easily diverted from their purposes by the attraction of watching someone else's activity as they go to get what they need from the other side of the room.

The Shop Corner

Five-year-olds do not need an elaborate shop. If weighing and measuring materials are kept together, and a box of cardboard money with a collection of empty packets, tins, paper bags and a few shopping baskets are produced, the children will arrange their own shops and use what they need. It is an economy of space to use the wall for hanging up measuring materials and, if coloured beads and reels are used, the collection makes another inviting and attractive display against what may be a drab background. Full details of weighing equipment will be found in Vol. II

The Discovery Shelves

These include the Nature Table and a spare surface where the children can place and assemble those curious objects which they find and like to bring to school. Good use can be made of such "finds" if boxes and lids are provided so that the things can be carefully displayed and sorted out. Enthusiasms grow quickly. One child brings a curious stone for

the discovery shelf; the next day several others bring their contributions. The stones are compared and arranged according to shape, texture, or colour. Perhaps a nature walk can be organized to search for different kinds of stones or to look for the sort of rocks which can be found in certain places, e.g. in a shallow brook. If expeditions are impossible, discussions about the "finds" and a hint of where others can be

pollen for himself. If possible, it should be placed so that the children constantly pass close to it during the course of the day.

The main purpose of the table is to display the chief characteristics of each season as it comes and goes. The children are encouraged to bring what they can and to keep everything bright and clean. They wash the jars, water the seeds and plants, feed the fish, clear away dead

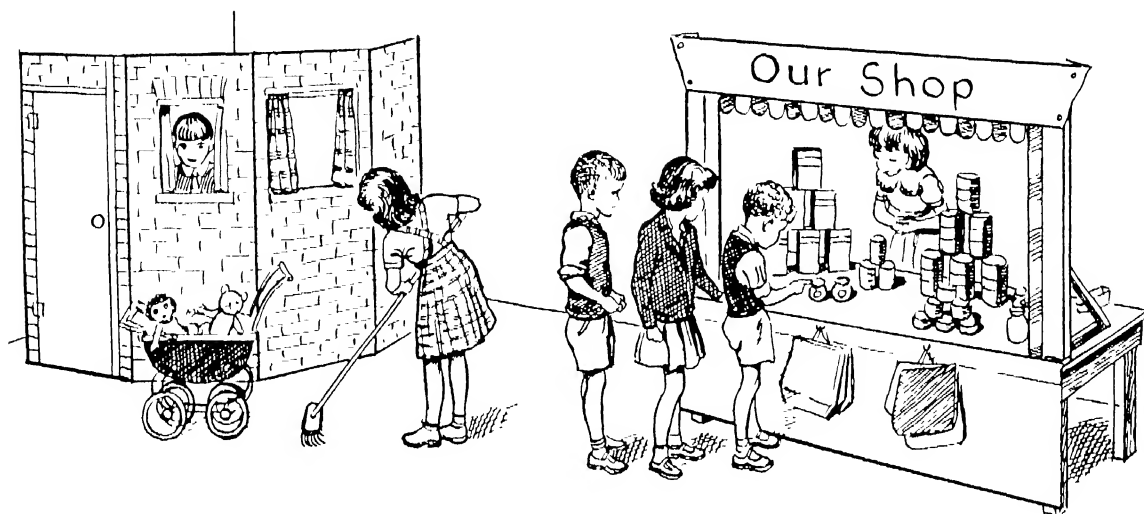


FIG. 9

Shopping and Home Activities

found, will send the children hunting after school hours. So the "discovery shelf" becomes, for a time, a collection of rocks and stones, sorted and perhaps labelled, e.g. "Mary found this in her garden" or "These are sharp stones," or "smooth stones." Such discovery and discussion is highly valuable for it leads outward to more and more investigation into the real world, to other problems and to independent thinking and observation. Stones will perhaps be displaced because the children bring feathers to school, or the springs of an old clock, or small torch batteries. We welcome every contribution, find somewhere for its display and take plenty of time for talking about it.

The Nature Table is also most valuable and is usually arranged in conjunction with the Discovery Table. It should be a low surface so that the smallest child can see right into the centre of a flower displayed on it and touch the

material and generally take a pride in this display of living things and in making it at least one beautiful spot in the room. From the beginning, they should be introduced to a way of broad classification because this helps their observations and deductions. For instance, twigs of one kind are arranged together, collections of seeds are sorted into various tin lids according to size or characteristics of the outer skin, and fruits of each kind are put into separate containers. The different kinds of flowers are classified, but some jars are specially arranged for beauty or to make a colourful posy.

We have to remember that there are certain aspects of natural life which attract young children more than others, e.g. things which move, tadpoles, sticklebacks; flowers and plants which are highly coloured, prickly, hairy or have a decided scent, anything which has a "funny" name like "snapdragon" or "old man's beard."

The following are a few suggestions for the sort of display which might be found on a nature table during each season.

Spring. "Lamb's tails," "pussy willows," horse-chestnut buds, young beech leaves, growing bulbs, flowering moss, sprigs of mint and sage, gorse, snowdrops, cowslips, celandine, saucers holding aubretia.

Summer. Stonecrops, parsley, ferns, snapdragons, bluebells, rushes, thyme, "oldman," wild roses, branches of developing fruit, garden and wild flowers.

Autumn. Leaves that are turning colour, baskets of fallen leaves, bracken, fruiting mosses, fruits of all kinds, fungi, wild and garden flowers.

Winter. Christmas tree, holly and mistletoe, snowberry, cape gooseberry, winter buds, house-leeks, sliced brussels sprouts, lichens on wood and stones.

Seed growing is possible all the year round, but children like quick results. Moisture, warmth, and light are necessary. The quickest to germinate are mustard and cress, peas, beans, corn, grass and turnip.

Indoor Gardens

Indoor gardens on a miniature scale are valuable in town schools. A zinc-lined box with holes for drainage, small earthenware dishes and tin dishes can be used. The children usually bring small quantities of soil and make the gardens themselves. Variations include —

1. A flat garden broken up by "hills" (stones).
2. A lawn and a border.
3. A herb garden.
4. A "water" garden. The soil must be very damp indeed and the receptacle well drained. Mosses, forget-me-nots and tiny ferns may be grown.

Aquaria

This is well worth while because the movement and changes seen in water, as well as the behaviour of creatures which live in water, are very attractive to young children. If a proper tank is not available, glass, enamel, or earthenware dishes can be used. There must be water plants as well as creatures in the tank, the plants are necessary to keep the creatures alive

and healthy. It is necessary also to have stones at the base under which the inhabitants can hide, and a layer of sand and soil so that the plants can take root. The aquaria is set up with the help of the children several days before the creatures are introduced. All creatures do not live well together, many are carnivorous and others cannibalistic. The following are safe with each other —

1. Tadpoles and snails.
2. Snails, sticklebacks, caddis, newts.
3. Silver beetles, snails, sticklebacks.

Water snails are important in every aquaria because they act as scavengers.

Food for These Creatures

1. Tadpoles — delicate plants and tiny bits of raw meat.
2. Sticklebacks — blood worms or shreds of raw meat
3. Caddis. these feed on the water plants.
4. Snails: live on dead and living vegetable matter.
5. Beetles and newts — meat, worms and tadpoles.

Calendars and Weather Charts

The weekly calendar and weather record hangs by the Nature Table as well as pictures which illustrate the season, and nearby them should be a special small shelf for picture books of flowers, birds and fish or any subject in which the children are interested. There are various ways of recording the weather (see Figs. 10 and 11). Making records becomes a daily ritual, but it should not end there. The five-year-olds add up their weekly total of sunny and rainy days and keep the calendars to compare the four totals at the end of the month. The numbers of the days are crossed off the calendar daily.

So, through our planned equipment we offer the children many wider and more interesting experiences than they usually find at home. In addition we provide a wealth of experience through stories, music and games. Before considering these experiences in detail, we will discuss how the day is organized so that the needs of the children are satisfied and a balanced healthy regime is ensured.

The Pattern of Life in the Five-year-olds' Classroom

In good homes, the children live a simple regular life. Meal times, rest, getting up and going to bed, times for play, all occur fairly regularly and the children know roughly what

is partly because five-year-olds need more routine at school than they did at home. They feel more grown up, they want to conform more to adult demands because of their new responsibilities and maturity. So we ask more from them but not all at once, regardless of the needs and individuality of each one. Secondly,


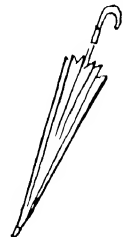
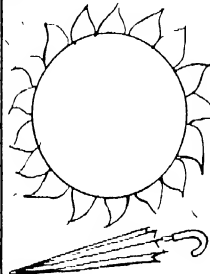
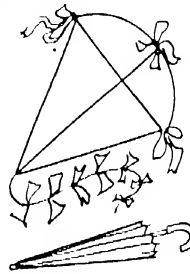

| March | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| wet | dry | sunny and dry | windy and dry | wet |

FIG. 10
Weather Calendar for a Week

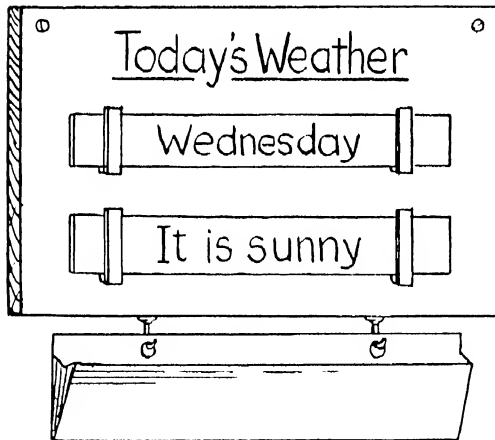


FIG. 11 (left)
Adjustable Chart for Daily Weather Record

to expect as each day and night comes round. They live within a loosely woven pattern of times when they are free to pursue their own purposes, and times when they have to do what adults have planned for them. In their period of play, they weave another pattern for themselves. It is one of alternating effort and relaxation. They turn to other activities when they are tired or bored.

Life in school also creates a pattern but it is more closely woven than the one at home. This

numbers of children together in unsuitable buildings with many makeshifts, make it necessary to impose more limitations on movement and freely chosen activities than is really necessary for successful development. Thirdly, the teacher of the five-year-olds is responsible for the gradual growth of "togetherness" or becoming "members one of another," which makes for fruitful community life and economical learning as the children pass to the other classes.

And, in a negative sense, a pattern of school

life is a safeguard against confusion. Five-year-olds cannot make use of too much freedom. Pattern, therefore, is a limiting factor and this is good for them. These limitations which we impose, e.g. the planned day, law and order, good arrangement of equipment, are among forms of external discipline which unconsciously influence behaviour for the better.

But though there is pattern, there is no rigidity and, above all, there is no insistence on "everyone doing the same thing at the one time." In fact, when children first come to school, there should be the widest possible measure of flexibility. We need not insist on exact time of arrival in the case of a child who finds it hard to face the new situations. There is no reason why everyone should join in when the teacher calls them round her to listen to a story. Newcomers especially will often prefer to stand and stare and to gradually creep towards the group as they hear something interesting. Sometimes, children will want to finish what they are doing instead of joining the others in the hall for dancing. The only sensible thing is to say, "Come as soon as you are ready, then." It is quite usual to find several children playing quietly in the five-year-old class while their teacher is engaged with the rest of the group. This does not mean that we do not encourage them to conform by asking, "Are you coming to hear the story?" or by suggesting, "You can sit close to me if you want to." By far the best way is to make "together" activities so absorbing that children prefer to co-operate. Few children can resist stories, well chosen and well told, and fewer still do not want to join in the singing of gay nursery rhymes, led by a happy teacher. There is, however, a rule that is worth making with the children, i.e. that if anyone does not join in, he may only play *quietly*.

Most children soon settle down into the orderly society of a classroom if the routine and order are not unreasonable. The sort of daily programme chosen depends largely on the imagination and personality of the teacher. The safer and more sure of herself she is, the less need she will have of a sharply defined time for every separate activity. Others can only give the children that feeling that all is well, if they have the support of a fairly set time table. Human

relations, being so all-important, it is unwise to insist on any definite pattern. Of course the layout of the school building also affects the order of the day. Where children cannot get into the open air easily, the pattern has to become slightly more definite, e.g. play indoors and out (two separate periods) instead of "in-and-out play" (one long period).

The needs which must be satisfied through routine are -

1. Long regular periods of play with materials provided in which the children can master their own problems in their own way, and with the minimum of interference from the teacher.
2. Leisure for the accomplishment of whatever is planned without clash or haste.
3. A daily time for those rituals and repetitions which five-year-olds set so much store by.
4. A gradual encouragement of the feeling of "togetherness" during class and group activities.

Suggestions for the Daily Pattern

A LOOSELY WOVEN PATTERN

Until 10.15 a.m. "*In-and-out*" Play The children play indoors or wander out into the playground. If they wish, they may take with them certain toys like prams, outdoor apparatus or the selection of oddments provided. In good weather, many teachers arrange for building, woodwork, sand and water play out of doors. If there is a garden, some children choose to work in it. In the summer, they may take out picture books or "sewing."

Until 11 a.m. A warning is given in good time that the room must be cleared and everything put back into its place. The children then arrange the chairs and mats for the morning hymn and prayer. This is followed by an informal talk between children and teacher in which they tell her any news and, perhaps, show the things which they have made or done during their "choosing time." The calendar and weather record receives attention. If a "Daily Newspaper" is kept (*see p. 181*) the teacher writes the day's news in it while they look on. They then drink their milk, sitting together in groups of their own choice, and wander out to play.

Some schools do not plan the usual play-ground time for five-year-olds because they are free to play in the open air for a good proportion of the day.

Until Noon. After playtime (about 11.15 a.m.) the children gather round their teacher for stories, a few minutes' speech play, some nursery rhymes and a sing-song. Alternatively, there is music followed, or preceded, by stories. At this time the teacher discusses with them any detail of behaviour, any fresh rule that has to be made or perhaps, "finds" on the discovery table have to be looked at, or something may need attention on the nature table. During the second half of the year, this is the time for a few reading games, such as finding words on the wall story.

From Noon to 1.30. Washing before dinner, dinner, rest.

From 1.30 to 3.30 p.m. The afternoon begins with "in-and-out play" and this lasts to ordinary playtime, if one is allowed, and is then followed by "together" activities, i.e. stories and rhymes, counting and speech play, music and singing. The teacher is free to select any or all of these, just as she feels is necessary for her children at that time.

Of course, these times are approximate. Play may continue into "together" times if the children are engrossed, but it can be shortened on days when they are restless and need more definite guidance. Scripture stories are included in the period before dinner or at the end of the afternoon. Physical Education is included as part of the "in-and-out play" if there is apparatus or equipment for big movement. If not, the teacher uses the special time allotted to her for P.E. Ideally this would be at 10 a.m. or just before dinner time. Music includes singing games, dancing, singing, all forms of musical activities in one period. But singing, like stories, can occur at any time. Children often burst into song as they play. The teacher also uses story and song as a way of getting attention and collecting everyone together. Sometimes, a discussion leads naturally to a short story or explanation, or someone says "I know a song about it." Then everyone joins in. In fact, so long as this slight scaffolding supports and forms the day and gives the children confidence, variations of many kinds can be made.

We have to remember that although routine is planned for the benefit of the children, they must not become its slaves, nor must teachers feel that programmes cannot be upset. The patterns can be broken without scruple on some occasions so that the children get used to adapting themselves to change and disarrangement.

The more stable the life in school, and the greater confidence the children have in their teacher, the more easily they accept, and indeed welcome, the occasional change. Rest can be missed and a sandwich lunch taken away from school when an expedition is made. Stories may have to be missed if there is something urgent to attend to in the garden or on the nature table.

EXAMPLE OF A MORE CLOSELY PATTERNED DAY

Until 10 a.m. Indoor play.

Until 10.45 a.m. Hymn and prayer, news, story and milk.

Until 11 a.m. Traditional playtime.

Until 11.35 a.m. Discussion, rhymes, reading games or "newsheet."

Until Noon. Play out of doors (or Physical Education).

Noon to 1.30 p.m. Washing, dinner, rest and play.

Until 2.30 p.m. Play indoors.

Until 2.45 p.m. Traditional playtime.

Until 3.5 p.m. Music.

Until 3.30 p.m. Story and rhymes, discussions and singing. Calendar and Weather Chart.

Wider Interests: Stories and Verse

Many children hear their first stories when they get to school. Whether listening to them results in wider interests and greater understanding of the world, entirely depends on the teacher's choice of stories and her way of telling them. Children gain little from those which are full of strange events and far removed from their experience. They may appear to listen contentedly to their teacher's flow of language, but they are probably daydreaming, catching a phrase here and there, and weaving them into their own imaginings.

Most children grow to love listening to stories because they have an insatiable curiosity about anything familiar or partly familiar. All detail, providing it is not entirely strange, fascinates them, and they have the normal human appetite for drama which they can understand. The stories we tell bring them valuable experience, not first-hand experience like watching tadpoles on the nature table or building towns and aerodromes, but *imaginary* experience. As adults live themselves into an interesting novel, five-year-olds live the story happenings and become, for a time, the story characters. This nourishes their mental life, enriching their background with fresh images and new ideas. At the same time, a well chosen story helps them to fit together isolated experiences of their own, shows them where they fit into the scheme of adult life, and enables them to understand how they and the grown-up world are connected. So the story children need to be rather like real-life children and the events need to follow one another in quick succession. Animals who act and talk like children are most acceptable. It is easy for children to identify themselves with creatures and to feel sympathy for them. Yet they are a little different, and catastrophes which overtake them are accepted more easily and are less disturbing than if they descended on children just like themselves.

A piglet, for instance, can be gobbled up by a wolf. But child-eating witches are unthinkable and frightening. At five, children need very much to get the world inside themselves clear and orderly. They are struggling to understand feelings and imaginings. Stories can be a very great help to them, or they can be disturbing. When they hear how the story child felt lonely and lost, they recognize the feeling as one of their own. "That's just how I feel when . . ." they think. It is a relief and comfort to them to know that other people feel as they do. Frightened and naughty feelings seem to be shared by the other children who are listening, even the teacher knows all about them. No one seems outraged or alarmed or shocked. From this realization comes greater stability as well as a wider understanding of others.

This is not possible if our stories are too strange. One of the best examples of a suitable

story for five-year-olds is "Peter Rabbit" by Beatrix Potter. The range of experience does not go beyond family life and Peter's unfortunate adventure in Mr. McGregor's garden. The excitements are woven into the scaffolding of ordinary things and familiar situations. Yet there are new settings, e.g. the home in the wood. And with the familiar feelings there is a touch of breathless suspense, of relief, of delicious comfort and safety after excitement. Some Bible stories are also very suitable, e.g. the story of Baby Moses. We should keep in mind -

1. Every story must include a familiar element which immediately compels the attention of the children. The more immature and the narrower their home life, the greater the need for well known and easily recognized details.

2. The strange elements should consist of familiar things and people, e.g. animals, locomotives, parents, toys, children's clothes, in new settings.

3. Provided the familiar elements are present, there can be strange and unfamiliar situations, e.g. different grouping of events in the animal, or the child's world.

There are story forms which appeal especially to each stage of growing up. Five-year-olds who have not listened to stories at home are content for some time with the story which is little more than a series of happenings, e.g. an account of a day's events in an ordinary child's life, or the story of a birthday, or a special expedition. Teachers can make these up for themselves, rather on the pattern of those which the children tell. They also like stories with repetition, they anticipate the familiar refrains with pleasure and often join in. Examples include "The Three Bears" and "The Gingerbread Boy" (Pitman). When they are more mature, they like stories with a more definite shape, i.e. a beginning, middle and end, with steady progress towards a climax and a satisfactory conclusion. Again "Peter Rabbit" is the perfect example which any teacher can imitate, in her original stories. It is possible to use a host of everyday happenings. Tales of cats and dogs at home, street incidents, shopping events, surprises brought by the postman, holiday excitements - all and many more everyday occurrences make

satisfactory plots for children who are so deeply interested in the world round them. Of course, we must embody plenty of detail of the kind likely to appeal to them, e.g. colour, size, shape and smell. And we must tell our stories with a sense of the dramatic. For instance, the children respond quickly to the noises which animals, or machinery, or natural phenomena make. "Meow, meow," said the cat, "Zoom, zoom," went the aeroplane, "Whoo-ooo-oooo," went the wind.

Every teacher of five-year-olds needs to be a skilled story teller. But this is not difficult as the children soon develop great appetites for anything in the form of a story and, unless we are utterly boring, or choose badly, they give willing attention. The first essential is to know the story well, and be in sympathy with the listeners. The second is to enter the dramatic situation, let everything happen in the right order and to keep to the point. The sequence of events should not be interrupted by such asides as, "Wasn't he a good dog?"

Each well chosen and well told story gives the children pleasure in word patterns and language forms which is the beginning of a taste for literature. Of course, they take great pleasure in the content, and enjoy the feeling of relaxation or excitement which colours every story time. The pleasure in listening to the words used and the shape of the whole, however, provides one of the earliest impressions of aesthetic appreciation. In effect, story time is equivalent to the older children's literature lesson.

There are some stories usually associated with five-year-olds which are better left for a year or two. One of these is "Red Riding Hood," another is "Hansel and Gretel," and a third, "Rumpelstiltskin." While children are still sorting out what is real from what is pretend, it is dangerous to muddle them with stories in which grannies are eaten by wolves, parents who deliberately lose their children, mothers who give away their babies, and so on. It is also harmful to tell them such stories as "Pearls and Toads" in which retribution out of all proportion for naughtiness and unkindness is meted out. Ideas of right and wrong, good and bad, justice and retaliation are still vague and but dimly perceived. While they are groping to under-

stand themselves and their relationship to the world and people's relationships with each other, it is more helpful to keep this sort of story until they are more sure of what is, and what is not, possible. Then they will feel free to delight in plenty of straight magic and absorbing fantasy.

Suggestions for Suitable Stories

Animal Stories, by Beatrix Potter.

Stories to Tell in the Nursery School, L. Mc. Crea, Oxford University Press.

I'll Tell you a Story, K. Bartlett, Blackie.

The Three Bears.

Henny Penny.

Gingerbread Boy, Pitman.

Three Little Pigs, Pitman.

Out of Door Stories, Margaret Kent, Pitman.

The Little Train, etc, etc, by Lois Lenski, Oxford University Press.

Milly Molly Mandy Stories, Howard, Harrap.

First Stories, Barnes, Arnold.

Stories in Vol. 2. of THE PRACTICAL INFANT TEACHER.

Scripture Stories include—

1. All stories of the babyhood and boyhood of Jesus and of His life with Mary and Joseph.
2. All stories which portray Jesus as a kind, helpful and comforting adult, and a Friend to children
3. Stories of Old Testament children, e.g. Samuel, Moses, Joseph, David.
4. Stories of the Saints, e.g. St. Francis and the Birds, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, etc.
5. Most of the Parables told for their simplicity and human interest.

Children cannot understand their inner meaning and no attempt at explanation is necessary.

Verse for Five-year-olds

Rhymes and verses are stories to young children until they have enough experience to associate the strong rhythm, the rhymes and the lift of verse. They love rhymes from the time their mothers played pat-a-cake with them. But numbers of children come from homes where they do not hear the usual nursery verses. Besides, nursery-rhyme days continue long after early

childhood and many teachers dispense with them far too soon. Every teacher of five-year-olds needs a good collection of nursery rhymes of all kinds and an interest in and love for them. She will sing them, say them, and use them for dances and games, and the children will acquire a wide repertoire and delight in their simple cadences, their rhymes and the dramatic little stories they tell. We should make use of many more of the less-known rhymes as well as the number rhymes, the counting-out games, riddles and nonsense verses. Like stories, they are children's literature. Many of them are real poems and they are all charming. Although the children enjoy them for their fascinating sound, they also delight in the stories they tell, e.g. the mouse that ran up the clock, the cat that went to see the Queen, and Wee Willie Winkie. They deal with many of the children's own interests, e.g. animals, birds, food, games, and they weave their alluring rhymes round such familiar themes as lost shoes, climbing up and falling down, a smack for getting a frock dirty. There are funny rhymes about the man in the moon and an old woman who went up in a blanket to sweep up the sky. Then there are charming little pictures of silver nutmegs and golden pears on a little nut tree, and a ship with sails of satin and masts that are made of gold.

So there is every reason why we should make nursery rhymes live for the children. We can introduce them at any time and in the story period we can hear fresh ones and enjoy old ones. There is no need to "learn" any of them, they just know them because we repeat them often and with such enjoyment. Sometimes, a rhyme lends itself to action, but usually the fun is in singing, saying and listening. It is a pity to force action or to expect the children to dramatize them in a formal fashion. It is doubtful whether children so young should be expected to act out stories and verses as lessons. The best action is spontaneous. If they are listening to, or saying, "Four and twenty tailors," they will jump up voluntarily as they reach the last line, "Run, tailors, run." This may lead to other spontaneous "playing" as the rhymes are spoken, and someone will want to be Willie Winkie, running round the room as the others say the rhyme up to the last line and then calling

out, "Are the children in their bed, it's past eight o'clock."

We shall discuss "speech rhymes" later (p. 179).

Collections of Nursery Rhymes

Everyman Book of Nursery Rhymes, Dent
We Play and Grow, a series by Maudie Cobby, Pitman.

Collected Poems, Series I, for Infants, Methuen.
1 School Mother Goose, Ed. E. R. Boyce, Macmillan.

Number Rhymes and Finger Plays, E. R. Boyce and Kathleen Bartlett, Pitman.

Finger Plays for Nursery Schools, H. I. Rostron, Pitman.

Musical Activities

Even in babyhood children respond to tune and rhythm. It is part of the teacher's work to nourish this interest of the children during their first school year. This does not mean that they must have music "lessons." Music, for little children is a matter of listening to music, singing or dancing to the music. They listen when we sing to them or play a gramophone record and when we ask them to do so before dancing. This "listening ear" as it has been called is very important, and should be cultivated in ways which appeal to small children. During any period when they are collected together, the teacher may take a drum, a tinful bell, a dulcino or triangle and say "listen!" She plays tunes and rhythms, repeating one several times, higher or lower, or louder and softer, before she asks them to clap, or tap, it or to sing it. Sometimes the children take a turn and one plays for the others. Perhaps it is a game "listen and guess" in which the leader plays the rhythm of a familiar nursery rhyme and the others guess which one it is.

Singing weaves in and out of each day, contributing to the general feeling of well being and stimulating an eager response from the majority. But it should also extend their experience of music. In their extensive repertoire of spoken nursery rhymes, the children will have learned a large number which are set to simple tunes. "Listen," we say to them, "here is a new one."

Then, "Listen again!" followed by, "Now you join in." There is no need for more teaching than this, provided the nursery rhyme settings are simple enough. There are nursery songs of other countries which can be included, but those which need elaborate settings should be kept till much later. We find that children often break into song as they play together. A few will sing around the teacher as the rest clear up after "choosing time." Sometimes a child sings alone to the others because she wants to. Although there are no formal singing lessons, no day passes without singing.

Schools enjoy different amenities and these the teachers should make full use of. Where there is a wireless set, the children may enjoy the music and movement programmes, but no child should be forced to join in or to take part. Encouragement is, of course, legitimate, and it is generally found that when children are used to school, they are not able to resist the compelling tunes for long unless they are unwell or tired. "Sitting out" and listening can be as valuable as movement on occasions. In some classrooms a "music shelf" or table is used.

There are a variety of instruments on which children make pleasant tunes and rhythms in addition to making experiments and discoveries. Not all children use them, only those who are interested. They will spend long periods, picking out tunes or beating out rhythms on the dulcino. Sometimes they will experiment with a bell, tapping it here and then there, listening to the difference in tone or to its length. The degree of experiment and discovery depends largely on their enjoyment of other musical activities introduced by their teacher. It is through listening, dancing and singing with her, that their interest is quickened and broadened. If the "music table" is impossible, we can perhaps have what is beloved by all children of every generation, one musical box.

Besides "making music" as they call this experiment, they "dance" with relaxed, free movement as they are encouraged to do during the broadcast lessons. There is no place for any formal movement to music in the five-year-olds' class. They listen, and dance what they hear, or they listen, and dance anything the "music says to them." Unconsciously they fall into the

mood and rhythm of uncomplicated but good music. Very often, they pretend to music, after listening to a descriptive tune which suggests, e.g. cowboys and Indians, trains or aeroplanes. In this connection, we have to remember that the music and not our words should tell the story. "Listen to the music," we say "it is about. . . ." "Now listen again and see if you can hear when the Indians come in. . . ." Lastly we say, "Now get up and dance it." In all music with movement activities, we encourage the children's natural joy in movement and their spontaneous response to tune and rhythm.

Teachers who cannot play the piano at all may make good use of drums and tambourines. They may also substitute simple, traditional singing games for the music with movement activities. Here the children find attractive pretence, stimulating rhythm, repetitive words, which are quickly learnt from hearing the teacher sing them, and delightful though simple tunes. We could make far more use of such games as "Wallflowers, wallflowers, growing up so high," and "Here we come, gathering nuts and may" than we do at present.

To sum up it may be said that the teacher's aims are—

1. To cultivate the "listening ear"
2. To encourage appreciation of music through joy in movement.
3. To provide a wide and varied repertoire of all kinds of nursery rhymes and singing games.

Music and more detailed suggestions are to be found in Vol. 5 under "Music, Song and Dance." The following are well recommended inexpensive volumes of nursery rhymes with easy accompaniments.

17 Nursery Songs from the Appalachian Mountains, Novello.

Twelve Manx Folk Songs, trans. Mona Douglass, Stanier Bell.

American Folk Song Series, No. 25, (Shirnmers) Chappell.

Sing Song from Sweden, Augener.

Hungarian Nursery Rhymes, Schott.

French Nursery Songs, Curwen.

Oxford Nursery Song Book, Oxford University Press.

Language Development in the Beginners' Class

We come now to the third of our aims in teaching five-year-olds, namely, to encourage them to talk clearly, freely and fluently. There are great differences in the way they talk when they come to school. Some five-year-olds can respond to, and to some extent use, 2,000 words in complete and fairly complicated sentences. These are usually the children who enjoy rich experiences at home. They live with parents who talk with them and discuss with each other. They have picture books, and stories are read to them. But there are other children who manage to convey their meaning in incomplete sentences, using mainly nouns and verbs and very few adjectives. The very inarticulate prefer gesture, nodding or shaking the head and hardly speaking at all.

What is the teacher's function? The good talkers should be able to talk still better for coming to school. At the end of their first year, their vocabulary should be richer, their fluent, continuous speech should come with increased confidence and clarity, they should be able to use more adjectives and have learnt to enjoy listening to good talk from others. Of the rest, all but the very dumbest can learn to talk fluently during this first year, but they will not all grow into clear speakers.

First, we shall deal with the encouragement we provide for freely expressed, easy talking. To all children, we must give that which life at home has denied. First, there is the teacher who *wants* children to talk and who *wants* to listen to what they have to say. This is indeed an unfamiliar experience for many children. The development of language is impossible without practice. There is no rule of silence in Infant Schools to-day. The children talk as they work and play, as they go round the school and out into the playground, in the cloakrooms and at mealtimes. They are silent only when they are absorbed and do not wish to talk and when they are deeply interested in listening to their teacher. Because teachers now talk so little as compared with the former traditional practice, the children listen much better. When their teacher talks now, she has something to say

which they want to hear. So during "together" times, there is good listening as well as good talking. Five-year-olds, who are very dependent on their teacher's goodwill, respond rapidly when we take the trouble to talk to individuals. We do our best to give our whole attention to the child who comes to confide his home news to us or who invites us to share his enthusiasm about an achievement or an experience. Talking together as they play contributes greatly to their fluency and enriches their vocabulary. But they must have things, materials and situations to talk about. All the toys and tools we provide, the nature table, the discoveries, the jobs that have to be done stimulate talking. Everything that interests five-year-olds makes them talk because they are easily excited and because doing and thinking are the same process to them. They talk about what they are doing in order to think more clearly. Words come to them spontaneously in order to clothe the thoughts stimulated by action. All the picture books, making materials, building, modelling, that we provide, will result in loosened tongues and rich verbal expression. Many children begin to improve as they talk to themselves as they play. They do not always want an audience, the running commentary or murmured soliloquy satisfies them until they feel the need to share experience.

While they are playing, the teacher finds opportunities to talk with individuals about themselves and their activities. But there is always one time during each day when those who wish gather round to exchange news, to talk over plans, and to show what they have made. It is a time of social activity when ideas are shared and suggestions offered. The children arrange themselves comfortably and the "speaker's chair" is placed near the teacher. The child on the chair is privileged to talk; the rest listen. Some need a great deal of encouragement to "speak as loud as you can," "to tell us *all* about it." It is fatal to repeat a child's contribution because it is indistinct, for that destroys the whole purpose of the discussion which is to share an experience. We achieve continuous, fluent talk by asking for more, by seeking greater detail, and by judicious questions which stimulate more effort.

Interruptions occur when listeners call out that they can't hear, or they ask questions, or volunteer a suggestion. The teacher has to hold a nice balance between audience and speaker, allowing useful comment, selecting the remark that will lead to more and better talk and to wider thinking without letting the audience swamp the speaker. This is a time when information about the adult world is given in terms which the children can follow, and at the moment when their interest is keenest. For instance, when a child shows the boat he has made, the teacher will ask him to tell the others how he did it, what kind it is, and what he is going to do with it. This arouses comments about boats generally, the teacher gives some information and gets out the picture book of boats. As the discussion proceeds, she introduces fresh vocabulary, e.g. names of the different parts of a boat or different types of boats. Some children will feel interested enough to make a boat themselves when they return to play, and perhaps several boats will appear on the shelf labelled "Things we have made." In the next discussion, the row of boats is talked over and the suggestion made that they should be in dock, or out in the river, or at sea. The shelf then becomes the river, the dock is roughly made with boxes and blocks, and a number of children will contribute some object which interests them, e.g. a crane for the docks, a seat by the riverside, an aeroplane which is hung on the wall above and comes through a picture of sky and cloud. As this idea develops the children soon acquire an entirely new vocabulary to do with rivers and craft.

In some classes, there is evidence of many interests of this kind, e.g. a hospital, a house made out of apple boxes with a garden, the "pictures," or a Red Indian camp. Each one has grown from the play of one or two children and from discussion led by a wise teacher who has also provided the necessary additional materials. The teacher nourishes their interest by showing pictures and books, telling stories and, if possible, arranging an expedition.

Well chosen stories and nursery rhymes help to increase vocabulary. Unfamiliar words are introduced in a background of familiar setting. The context and the simple, straightforward

narrative makes the meaning clear and the word becomes woven into the child's understanding.

It is impossible to select any one time during the day when language development is particularly evident. It is the result of the social setting, the living, stimulating background, and the friendly atmosphere created by the personality of the teacher. Children can talk with confidence only when they feel safe and content.

This is equally true of clear, well enunciated speech. Large numbers of five-year-olds articulate indistinctly and it is important that we do what we can to help improvement. The more they talk, the more practice will their speech organs get and this in itself, is a necessary help. But at home, they have learnt to imitate adults who talk in a lazy, slovenly way. Lips, tongue, cheek muscles, throat muscles have grown certain loose habits of articulation and now have to be re-educated. This is a very difficult business, especially as each evening we return the children to homes where the same lazy speech sounds are heard and imitated. Experts tell us however, that if we do our best before the age of six, we can effect some improvement. Later on, when the children can understand the need for greater clarity, they can help themselves still more by consciously producing the more precise sounds and by exercising their speech muscles.

The Improvement of Speech

Our aim is to encourage more precise and accurate speech sounds so that speech is clearer and more easily understood.

1. It is estimated that half the organs of the body as well as the nervous system are used as we talk. Anything which improves the general condition of the body, especially in balance and control and in breathing, helps to tone up speech muscles and to make the voice more audible. Hence, another reason why children should move about easily in school, enjoy plenty of play out of doors with something they can climb on, scramble over, and use for balance. All outdoor playthings like balls, ropes and hoops make their contribution.

2. In place of the example of lazy, degenerate speech out of school, we have to provide a voice

which attracts the children and which belongs to someone they want to imitate because they admire and love her. This voice, of course, is their teacher's. Her voice, her manner of speaking, the tone, the courtesy implied, and her controlled, accurate enunciation has tremendous influence. (We are not speaking of local accent in this connection, this cannot be helped.)

By the end of the first school year, many children will imitate their teacher's speech in school, and the noisy, confused street talk when they get beyond the gates. This is an outstanding achievement.

3. In addition, there is a place during each day for five or ten minutes' "speech play." The aim is to make the children conscious of the value of good speech sounds, and to provide energetic practice of accurate movement of speech muscles in a way which they enjoy. They must enjoy these games so much that they continue to play them outside school, and in the same precise manner. Only then is muscle re-education possible. There are many suitable collections of jingles and nonsense rhymes which can be used. (It is a pity to use those nursery rhymes which are really poems.) Perhaps after a story, we introduce a jingle like,

"Skipping is fun,
 Skipping is fun,
 Skipping is fun
 for everyone "
 (P. Edmonds)

We say it very clearly, rather exaggerating the beginning and ending consonants for it is the precise articulation of these sounds which makes for clarity. Then we ask them to "watch my lips" and, "see how hard they work" and, "look for my teeth." If we watch children who speak indistinctly, we observe that the lips hardly move and the teeth are rarely noticeable. When they repeat the jingle, we remind them to feel how hard their muscles move. There is no need for them to raise their voices, we want them to discover that careful production makes them heard and that shouting is not necessary. They take turns, they whisper a rhyme, they mouth it, they say it in a laughing voice, a sad voice and so on. Then they make up their own

rhymes, e.g. "Painting is fun," "Running is fun," "Singing is fun," and in a few weeks, they have a wide repertoire of jingles to add to that of nursery rhymes and songs. Each day, some are played with, the children who need most attention getting more turns. Sometimes there are several voices and they can take parts, e.g. "Fat and Thin" (*Adventures in Words*, Rodney Bennett). The test of our work comes when we hear them playing at jingles in the playground, or when they say to us, "I do it every night before I go to bed."

They also imitate the noises they hear in streets and animal noises, e.g. they pretend to be cows, goats, donkeys, cats and dogs, aeroplanes, cars, trains, bells, etc. Whatever the games, however, we never allow them to forget that lips, jaws and tongues must move vigorously. These noises emphasize the vowel sounds but some, e.g. "moo-oo-oo" and "zoom-zoom-zoom" are excellent for both vowel and consonant pronunciation.

Finally, we must remember that singing is also good voice production.

Books of Speech Jingles

Speech Rhymes, Introductory Book, Clive Sansom, Black.

Adventures in Words, 1st Series, R. Bennett, U.L.P.

Adventures in Words, Introductory Book, R. Bennett, U.L.P.

Stepping Stones, I. Serjeant, Blackie.

We Play and Groc - I am Five, Maisie Cobby, Pitman.

50 *Speech Games*, H. Yalley, Pitman.

The Place of the 3 R's in the Class for Five-year-olds

We come now to the teacher's fourth aim, the children's approach to the 3 R's. During this first year, we do not attempt to give lessons in how to read, write or do sums. Nevertheless, the children learn a great deal in readiness for the time when they can profit by formal instruction, and they gain understanding and insight without which successful mastery of the skills is impossible. We shall deal with reading and writing first.

The Challenge to Read and Write

Our first task is to see that the classroom environment arouses an interest in books and writing materials. We want the children to discover and to enjoy using them, to choose picture books as favourite toys just as they choose bricks or sand. We also want them to enjoy the experience of marking and drawing with writing materials and the tools of writing, e.g. pencils and crayons. By attractive equipment for free use, and through encouragement,

can "read." The following list will provide an indication of what is needed.

Photo Colour Books, Arnold, Leeds.

First Stories, Arnold, Leeds.

We Play and Grow, a series by Maisie Cobby, Pitman

Wonder Ways Activity Readers, Ellice G. Benton, Pitman.

Commands Picture Books, Arnold, Leeds.

On Our Way, Macmillan, London.

Macmillan's Picture Books (8 in all).

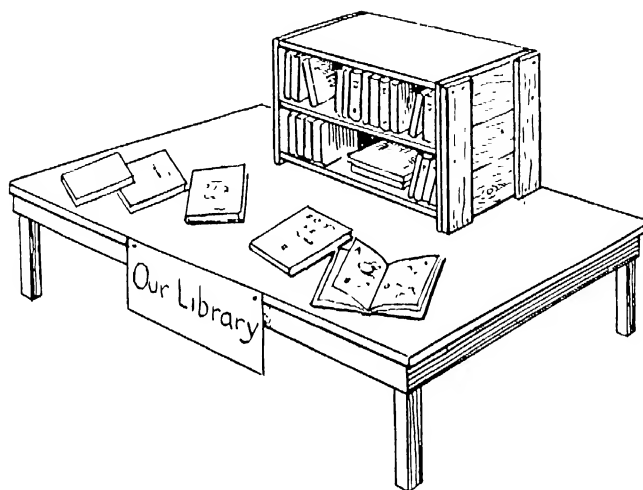


FIG. 12

The Book Table — an Encouragement to "Read"

we allow them to play their way towards reading and writing. Then when they want to know *how* (i.e. to improve their first experience) we teach them by methods they appreciate and understand.

The first challenge comes from attractively arranged and carefully selected books on shelves or tables which are easy to reach and which display the covers to good advantage.

If space allows, a few seats are grouped near the books where children can spread them out and enjoy them without disturbance. It is very necessary to keep everything clean and mended, and to add fresh books from time to time. The selection of books is highly important. Pictures are important but there should be some text, either a name, a phrase or a few lines which tell the story. Illustrated Nursery Rhyme collections are most useful because the pictures indicate the well-known words which the children find they

Fiddle-dee-dee (Rhymes) Macmillan, London.
Pictures and Words, Warne, London.

Alphabet Book, Penguin.

Spelling Book, Penguin.

Reading and Spelling Stories, E. E. Ellsworth, Pitman

Child's First Picture Dictionary, Large Book-sellers

The teacher encourages the children to use these books as she sits down and talks with those in the "book corner." She shows them how she turns a page at the time and reads from left to right, and how she begins again on the line below. Some children will be familiar with books at home, but the large majority need this explanation. During "together times," the teacher reads aloud from the books which are daily becoming more familiar. Before long, the children ask for certain stories, just as they do

at home. Then they will choose to read them for themselves and begin to ask, "Is that where it says. . . ." or "I know this is so and so's name." Thus a love for a few books is built up and pleasure in the well-known few is carried over to books generally.

As the year advances, the teacher introduces more and more books which she has made and written about the children and their doings, and which various members of the class have illustrated.

These books are discussed, read and re-read as groups use the book corner and they are often in demand during class "together times." The

4. Pictures to cut out, paste, brushes, scrap books or loose oddments of paper.

Experience of Reading as Recording

When the children read books about themselves they grasp some important ideas. They perceive that books bear a relation to themselves, to the world of grown-ups, that words can talk, that they tell stories and relate what happens. In other words they perceive that reading is part of the adult world which they want so much to discover and to understand. We emphasize this aspect of reading as well as writing when we introduce the class Newspaper.

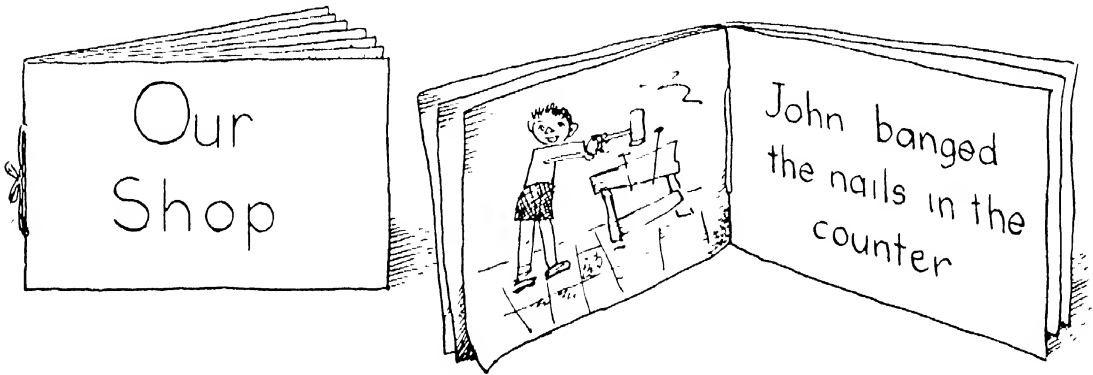


FIG. 13

A Home-made Book written by Teacher, illustrated by Children

children are able to pick out their own names and a number of nouns which refer to the pictures, and as the context is so familiar, they soon read these books fluently.

The Writing Table (see p. 164) is arranged near to the book shelves. In addition to providing the materials suggested, it is important to see that there are activities which encourage scrutiny of shape and pictorial detail. The materials for these are usually grouped together in some convenient place not far from the writing materials.

Examples

1. Jigsaws of various degrees of difficulty, pegboards, mosaics, tablets.
2. Animal shapes, cutouts, templates, for drawing round and using like letters.
3. Picture-matching games, including picture lotto and picture dominoes.

To get the maximum benefit from this activity remember that

1. The news should be written *after* the day's discussion.
2. The children should select the news although the teacher may edit their material. (Sometimes a sentence is too long or too complicated.)
3. They should repeat the news before it is written so that they are all quite clear what words the teacher is to write and are able to anticipate them as the teacher writes.
4. The teacher writes the news as they watch, using a thick black pencil or a giant "freart" crayon. She keeps their interest by calling attention to the visual characteristics of words or of certain letters, e.g. she remarks on their length or pattern, on similar beginnings or endings, or she reminds them that a certain word begins with the same letter as John's

name begins with and so on. She also mentions the letter names which the children remember easily. We do not teach the alphabet in any formal way, but by showing the alphabet books and remarking "this letter is called. . . ." She also talks about the *sound* the different letters make, e.g. "S" or "T." But there is no attempt



FIG. 14

*Child's Illustration
for Daily News Sheet*

at this stage to teach sounds, any more than letter names.

5. The teacher, after finishing the newspaper, should get the children to read the news aloud and, during the second half of the year, they take turns to pick out the different words, to find words that are alike, different or nearly alike, and to name those which begin with the same letter or end in the same syllable.

6. The news should be illustrated by one of the children, a volunteer. Then it is hung in a suitable place within the children's reach. They read and re-read it as they pass to and fro and turn over the earlier pages to read what happened last week. At least once during each week, the newspaper is read right through.

It is a good plan to ink in the news in a spare moment. This is easily done if a tray is kept ready with a bottle of Indian ink and several

parcel pens of different sizes. These nibs make bold, thick outlines which the children can easily see from a distance.

Discovering the Need to Read

At the same time, we provide experiences which emphasize why children should be able to read, and which demonstrate the place of reading in the adult world.

One of the child's earliest experiences in school concerns written symbols. When we

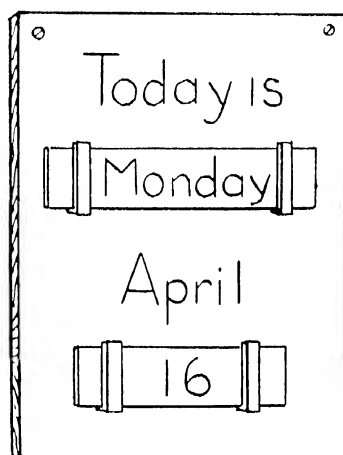


FIG. 15

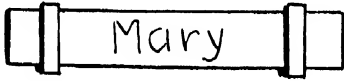

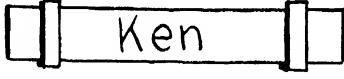

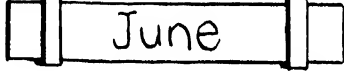

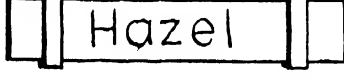

*Calendar for Children
to Adjust Daily*

show the newcomer his hook in the cloakroom and his towel hook and private tidy box, we say "You will know it's yours because your *name* is written on it." Here is a telling instance of the need to be able to read. Then the "Jobs Notice" is put up every Monday morning and the children want to read in order to discover if they have a job and if so, what it is.

The need to be able to read is similarly stressed when children are called on to alter the names of the day on the calendar.

Very often, the teacher says "I shall write what I want you to do instead of telling you." She may use such phrases as "Clear up, please." or "Talk softly, please." In this way they learn to understand and carry out written instructions.

Boxes of materials are often labelled, e.g. "nails," "reels," "corks," and the children need to recognize the words to get what they want.

| Jobs | | |
|---|--------------|---|
|  | Books |  |
|  | Milk |  |
|  | Nature Table |  |
|  | Sweeping |  |

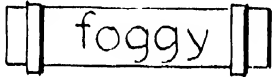


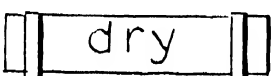
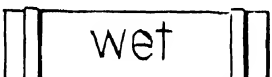
| November | | |
|-----------|---------|--|
| Monday | It is a |  day |
| Tuesday | It is a |  day |
| Wednesday | It is a |  day |
| Thursday | It is a |  day |
| Friday | It is a |  day |

FIG 16
*Adjustable Wall Charts
 showing Children the Necessity for Reading*

First Writing

The approach to writing usually follows when children have acquired some slight skill in the use of crayon or pencil. In their busy books (those books kept in tidy boxes for using as they like) letters begin to emerge amongst the scribble, and sometimes the children write their names. For them to draw an object and to try to label it with the names is a common occurrence. Often they will ask the teacher to help them. They may search the wall sheets and

the teacher asks if a child will "bring your book and read it to me."

The children write with "Freart" crayons or thick black pencils and no attempt is made by the teacher to correct badly formed letters. Instead, attention is called to the way certain letters are written as we write them on the newsheet or blackboard. "We begin this way," we point out and we suggest that they try it the same way in their books. Perfect handwriting is a development which follows the children's own physical growth, and we only do harm if we

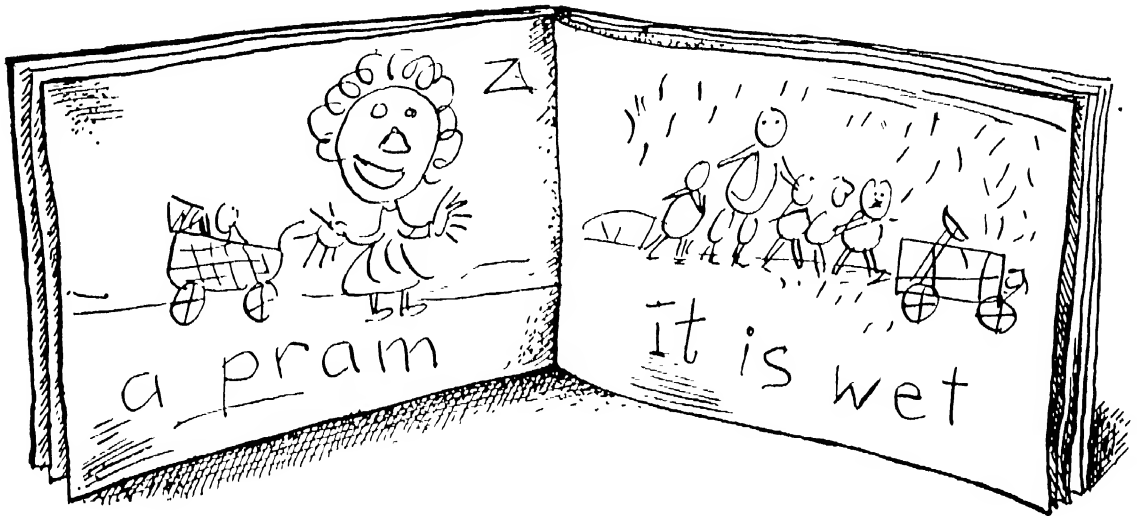


FIG. 17

A Child's First Writing Book

class notices if they remember that the word they need is there. When a teacher notices that any child seems particularly interested in writing words, she gives him a special book for making pictures and words. He numbers the pages and takes care to begin in the right place. During "choosing periods" he draws a picture and with the help of his teacher, labels or explains his drawing in his own words. Sometimes he records what he did at home, or what he made in school. It may be some item of news from the adult world which has caught his interest, or perhaps it is a picture of animals, traffic or something from a film. This book is used as another story book to read. Children share one another's and the books are read to the whole class during story times. Sometimes

insist that they cramp up their muscles and tense their nervous system in an effort "to try." Easy relaxed movements are essential for clear flowing handwriting. Lined paper should not be used in the five-year-old classroom nor thin pencils.

Learning their First Reading-book Vocabulary

Towards the end of the first year, some children are ready to read their first printed book. They express this readiness by the way they continually use the picture books and write in their own story books. They are also interested and accurate in selecting single words from sentences on the newsheets, and they recognize

some common names. In this group there may be several natural readers who read with little or no guidance. They probably come from homes where adults read books and have read to the children. If the first reading books in school are chosen with care, these gifted children may read without any other instruction than a few weeks' individual practice with their teacher. But their books must be interesting, attractive and well illustrated.

charts, but it is an advantage to make them in the classroom and with the help of the children. Select about ten episodes from the book and decide on the captions and number the sheets. Let the children make the illustrations. Print captions clearly in large letters with a wide parcel pen and Indian ink using as many words as possible from the reading book.

4. Explain the "wall" story to the children. Arrange it low enough on the wall so that they

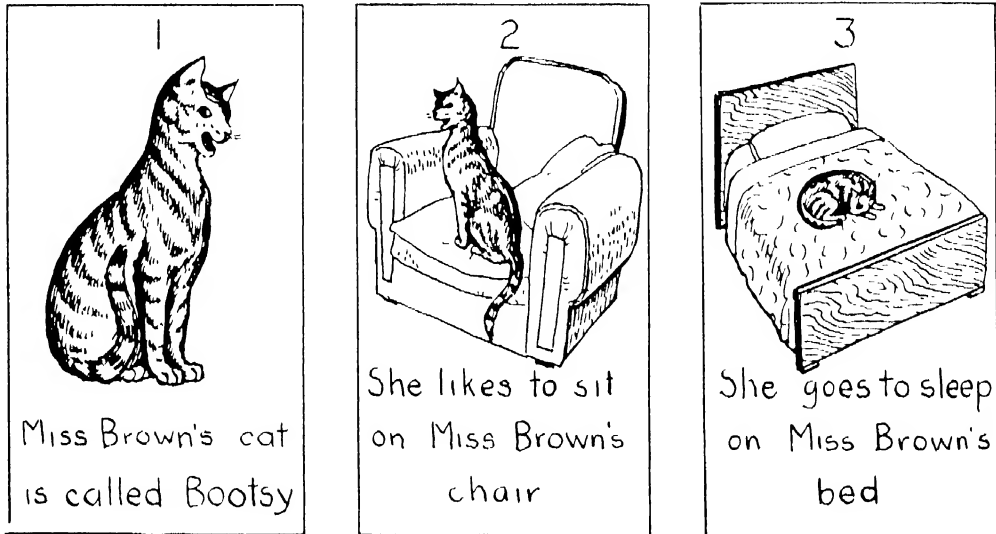


FIG. 18

Wall Charts to Supplement a Reading Book

Most children of this age who are physically and emotionally ready to read, need more help in order to be able to recognize the words in their first books easily. It is very important that adequate preparation is done so that their first book is read fluently, successfully and with great enjoyment. The following are suggestions which have proved satisfactory in large classes.

1. Select a series of reading books for them appeal to the children's interest, for familiar and light vocabulary (about 50 words) and for good illustrations on the same page as the text.

2. Read the first book to the children and discuss it well. Re-read later and, when the story is familiar, suggest that the children dramatize it.

3. Introduce preliminary wall sheets, with the entire vocabulary of the first book. Some series of reading books include printed wall

charts, but it is an advantage to make them in the classroom and with the help of the children. Select about ten episodes from the book and decide on the captions and number the sheets. Let the children make the illustrations. Print captions clearly in large letters with a wide parcel pen and Indian ink using as many words as possible from the reading book.

Using the Wall Story

1. Read to the whole class. Let individual children read certain "pages."

2. Play at "finding" separate words, sometimes covering words over and asking "which one is underneath."

3. Show carefully how to discover words by reading the caption on one "page" until the unknown word is reached. Give a good deal of help, e.g. when they cannot find words suggest "it is on page. . . ." "it is the longest word on page. . . ." or "it begins with. . . ."

First Individual Work

The group who are ready for definite help will be able to attack their first individual work, and learn to recognize their first reading vocabulary. We discuss with them this first learning task so that they understand quite clearly what they have to do. This is a highly important step in their more formal education, and we should do all we can to make success possible.

1. Provide matching cards for words and phrases on the wall story. The letters should be smaller than those on the wall but not as small as those in the books.

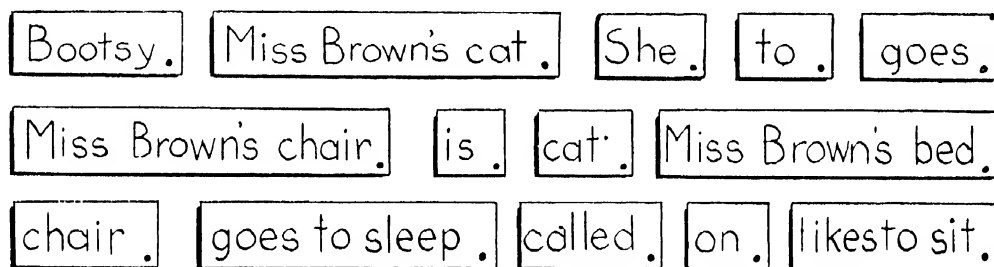


FIG. 19

Matching Cards for use with Wall Charts

The "job" is to discover the words on so many (e.g. 6) of the small cards every day, read them to the teacher, then write them. Some children will know them without taking them to the wall to match, and they will soon work through the cards and require the next "job."

2. Provide the first and simplest work cards which use the vocabulary of the story. Introduce the words which give the instruction as a class activity, e.g. draw, write, etc. Flash drill can also be used to get quick recognition of these "doing" words. The work cards are written with the same size of letter as that in the first story book.

Let each child have a record card with as many numbers in squares as there are work cards. Each one successfully completed is marked off, and when they are all finished the child is ready to read his first printed book.

Reading the First Book

It is economical for several children to read

in turns with the teacher guiding them. Whenever a child forgets a word, she gives him a clue which he will be able to use when reading alone, e.g. "Look at the picture," or "What do you think it is?" (in other words, "guess" from the context) or he can be referred to the wall story, "It's on page. . . ." But we do not allow undue delay. It is better to give the word than to make the activity boring or to allow the children to get discouraged.

The first book is usually re-read and then a number of the simplest and slimmest books are read before a second reader is started. The following are suitable supplementary books.

Wonder Ways Activity Readers, Pitman.

First Stage Readers, Pitman.

Happy Venture, Introductory Reader, Oliver & Boyd.

Red Stories, Macmillan.

The Little Books, 1-5, Macmillan.

Janet and John, Introductory Book, Nesbit.

Home-made books are still of great value, and the newsheets and other everyday reading activities continue to increase the skill of all the children, including those who are tackling reading books.

Number in the Five-year-olds' Classroom

We now postpone a good deal of the traditional number work which used to be learnt by memory during the first school year. Instead, we provide experiences and equip our classroom so that the children use figures and number ideas as they live through their activities and grow into an understanding of this aspect of the world

Draw
a cat on a bed
a cat in a chair
a cat called Bootsy
Write the cat's name

Draw
a cat
a chair
a bed
Miss Brown

FIG. 20

*Examples of Work Cards based on
Newly Acquired Vocabulary*

in which they live and which they need to master. Just as they play their way towards the skill of reading and writing, so they play their way to an insight into measurement and number in everyday life. Side by side with experience, the teacher gives them the appropriate number language and they practise counting. During the year, they begin to introduce figures into

is dealt with in great detail under "Arithmetic in the Infant School," Vol. II.

Records

It is not easy to keep adequate records of each child's progress or development during the first year. Most teachers write a brief diary at the

Progress in Reading Interest

A mark is made against the activity. There is no grading until individual work is undertaken.

| | Date | Uses Books | Looks at Pictures | Matches Pictures | Uses Alphabet | Draws Letters | Labels | Writes words in Book | Interested in Newsheet | Follows Wall Story | Identifies Separate Words | Matching Cards | Work Cards | 1st Reader | Supplementary Readers |
|------------------------|-------|------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mary Smith 10.1.47. | 10/5 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 25/5 | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| | 8/6 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| | 15/7 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| | 9/9 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | |
| | 27/9 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | |
| | 6/10 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | |
| | 21/10 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | 18/11 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | 15/12 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | 12/1 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Read Stories 1-4, Mac and Tosh 1. |

Record of Number Experiences

There is no grading. The marks are against the activity.

| | Date | Plays With Figures | Plays Shop | Uses Coins | Uses Jigsaws, Pegboard | Beads | Builds | Water Play | Sand Play | House Play | Uses Scales | Attends to Calendar | Counts to 20 | Counts in 2's to 20 | Writes Figures | Comments |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------------------|-------|--------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|----------|
| Mary Smith 10.1.47. | 10/5 | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| | 18/5 | | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| | 25/5 | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| | 1/6 | | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| | 8/6 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| | 15/6 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | |
| | 22/6 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

their drawings and scribbles and, later on, into their own story books. By the end of the year they begin to understand shopping and to deal with pennies and halfpennies. But this approach

end of each week. This shows the direction of the children's interests and mentions any outstanding developments. The following headings are of practical value.

1. Materials used mainly.
2. Groups playing together.
3. Solitary players.
4. Topics discussed and contributions made by individual children.

8. Music Activities.
9. Expeditions.

Instead of records of progress in the 3 R's, teachers keep simple records of materials used.

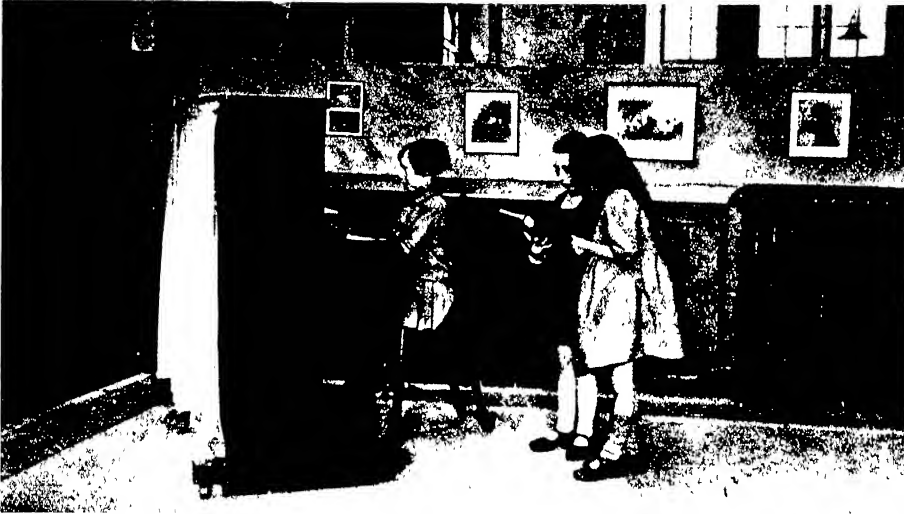


FIG. 21

Making good use of the Piano. The pictures here are hung low enough for the children to study them

5. New vocabulary introduced.
6. Children's contributions to Nature Table, etc. Developments and discussion.
7. New stories told, stories asked for, and stories repeated.

This indicates the direction of a child's interest in any of the skills. Of course, once a child has begun individual work, the recording is straightforward provided that the individual work has been carefully chosen and graded.

CREATIVE PLAY IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

MOST of us who are concerned with the teaching of young children learned of the importance of "Play" in the Infants' School in the earliest days of our training, we heard lectures on the psychology of play and we read books about the educational principles of pioneers such as Froebel and Dewey, and many of us were inspired. But there are some of us, perhaps, who did not become fully aware of the immense value of play and its vital contribution to child development until we had had real contact with the children themselves, until we had lived with them and watched them grow and develop. It is, then, through our own experience in schools, that many of us have come to believe not only that children learn to express themselves and gain experience through their play, but that they also relieve many of their emotional problems and difficulties in this way.

In recent years teachers, and indeed others, have shown an increasing interest in "Play" as an educational method and it is a subject which is frequently discussed and debated, not only in educational circles, but in the correspondence columns of the popular newspapers. Sometimes there is a good deal of feeling apparent in these discussions. It would be wise perhaps to face up to the fact that there often arise misconceptions and misunderstandings about what we are trying to do in the Infants' Schools, and in view of this it is very important that there should be no confusion in our own minds about the real nature of Creative Play.

Play as Part of the Curriculum

When we introduce "Play" into our curriculum it should be as a fundamental and integral part of it. Education involves the whole process of learning to live and to live with other people, it is in their play that the children create their own world and we, as teachers, should help them to find satisfying materials and allow them to experiment with them, we should give them

opportunities for solving problems, for setting standards for themselves and for managing their own affairs.

We sometimes make the mistake of trying to discriminate between what we call "Work" and what we call "Play," forgetting that in the attitude of a young child the activities of both work and play are often synonymous. It is when we try to make an artificial dividing line between them that we lose sight of our real objective, for it is then that play comes to be regarded as a luxury in a school and when this happens we find anxious teachers, so much afraid that the children are wasting their time, that they direct the play activities in such a way that a reading or a number interest is inevitably involved. In other words, this kind of teacher will allow the children to "learn by doing" so long as it is reading and number they are learning. At this point we should like to stress that, amongst other interests, real reading, writing and number interests do arise quite naturally and can and should develop on a sound basis through creative play, but we must not make the mistake of fostering these interests alone, nor must we think that the stimulation of such interests is the main purpose of our creative play activities, it is far from being so. This aspect of a child's education is naturally important, but it should take its rightful place in his development and should not predominate.

We have said that play should not be regarded as a luxury in an Infants' School and certainly, if we believe in play as a method of education, then we should use it, not half heartedly but with courage and conviction. We should *not* think of the activity periods as being periods in which time is wasted, but on the other hand we must see to it that time is not really wasted. One is sometimes depressed and rightly critical of the boredom, effortlessness and destructive play which would appear to be the outcome of an environment which lacks the stimulation of satisfying and suggestive materials, and one in

which there is no real opportunity for purposeful activity.

Creative play is not haphazard activity. There is freedom but not licence, there is freedom to choose one's activity, to experiment with material as one likes; freedom to move about and to discuss one's ideas and problems with others, freedom to make mistakes and to start afresh and, not least, freedom to pause for thought and reflection without the fear of being hustled by an anxious adult who is afraid one is wasting time because he does not appear to be busy at that moment. If the child is to have this freedom of choice there must be an adequate and varied supply of material to which the child should have easy access, and the room should be carefully prepared before the period. This is important, because very often the suggestive nature of certain types of material will stimulate creative effort in the children. Obviously the problem of space and arrangement is an individual one which every teacher can best solve for herself, it has been found, however, that by arranging desks in groups to form tables not only is there more room for the children to move about the classroom freely, but it is also much easier for them to work in groups with bulky materials when the desks are arranged in this way, it would seem almost unnecessary to suggest that in some schools, the hall, the corridors and the playground provide extra space, and whenever possible the children can work there as well as in the classrooms.

The Materials

In the woodwork corner there should be real tools, not toys, including saws, hammers, nails and, for the older children, chisels, pliers, screw-drivers, planes, files, knives and sandpaper, the children can work with nails of varying sizes, screws, panel pins and waste wood. Orange boxes, margarine boxes and sacks of waste wood from local wood yards can be collected and used. There should be glue, size, cheap paint or powder paint and varnish provided for the finished models.

For construction with bricks there should be a good quantity of wooden blocks of different shapes and sizes. These can be stored in tea

chests. Barrels, logs and planks are popular to use with the bricks. The cheapest bricks can be cut from planks of salvaged wood and sandpapered.

At one table large lumps of clay should be available for modelling. Clay is a very satisfying material to handle and to experiment with.

For the children who wish to paint it is necessary to have large sheets of paper, charcoal, bright powder paint and big brushes. Sometimes the older children wish to paint a co-operative picture or frieze. For this, a roll of kitchen paper or wall paper is necessary.

At another table the children can make pictures either by tearing or cutting coloured paper and pasting it on to a background. For this activity they need scissors, paste and brushes, poster paper in all colours and dark paper for backgrounds.

An activity which produces a considerable amount of creative effort in the child, and one which is certainly very satisfying to him, is that of constructing with waste materials, and for this purpose it is useful to make a collection of cardboard boxes of all sizes, cartons, spools, cotton bobbins, tins, corks, pipe-cleaners, wire, string, old batteries and any of the broken tools or gadgets which we turn out when we are spring cleaning our house and garage. Children see many possibilities in these "odds and ends" and will use them as they need them. One should also provide a box of materials for sewing, with brightly coloured silks, cottons and wools and a supply of needles, with which they can make and dress dolls and puppets besides trying other kinds of experimental sewing.

An important feature of the classroom is the Wendy House which, with its furniture and dolls, its tea-sets and cooking utensils and a big box of dressing-up clothes, gives the children scope for fantasy and dramatic play. It offers a wide variety of interests and fulfils many individual needs. Play in the house is often imaginative but frequently it is based on the home life of the children, who re-live their familiar experiences. It has often been found that children with problems of insecurity in their homes will play out their difficulties in this way. Most children enjoy the domestic activities which revolve round the house, they find satisfaction in

imitating the life of grown-ups, using equipment for washing clothes, bathing dolls, baking, gardening, shopping, dusting, sweeping, scrubbing, polishing and spring cleaning.

Crude elemental materials such as water and sand should always be provided for the younger children. These two fundamental play materials have the advantage of being easily and cheaply obtained. In order that play with these materials can be both imaginative and progressive there should also be improvised water and sand toys such as rubber tubing, funnels, bottles, corks and brightly painted tins and spoons. The older children can use water measures.

There should be a reading corner in each classroom where the children can sit quietly and look at attractive picture books or read stories, and also a writing table for those who wish to experiment with writing as an activity. Many children in the six- to seven-year age group have reached a stage when they wish to express themselves creatively in this way, and it is good that they should have the opportunity for writing their own stories, poems, plays, prayers and letters.

During the "Creative Play" period the children can arrange the classroom flowers, tend the nature table, and also care for the pets which might well include rabbits, cats, mice, guinea pigs as well as silk-worms, stick insects and creatures of the aquarium.

Most children will find that much of the material mentioned above has varied uses; a "Vim" tin might suggest the funnel of a ship, a cork the buffer of an engine, a piece of copper wire the electrical equipment of a motor car and an old overall can soon be made into a sail for a yacht or a curtain for a puppet theatre. This stimulation of ideas by the material in the environment is an important aspect of activity work, for when the children see such possibilities in the material and an idea of this kind suddenly occurs to them they will often plan, invent, improvise and work on that idea, they will use their imagination and become completely absorbed in this self-chosen activity. It is here that we can see the beginning of creative thought in the children and this, together with their absorption in the activity and the feeling of satisfaction which accompanies it, helps them

considerably in their development as whole persons.

Another aspect of activity work which one must not overlook is the play and experiment with pushing, pulling, climbing and clambering apparatus. All children have a need for this physical activity but in the Nurseries and Reception Classes particularly we find it is a means by which these young children can express themselves creatively, it is in this way too that the children gain control over their limbs and develop harmony and rhythm in their movements, with the acquiring of this muscular skill there comes a greater degree of confidence arising from a sense of achievement when, for example, they have climbed to the top of the jungle gym or chute.

Similar material and equipment to that which we have described should be provided for the children throughout the Nursery Infant School, but we must remember that every child will eventually find his own creative level in each particular activity, and that we must look for results in the effect of that activity on the child himself rather than in the external appearance of the finished product of his activity. He must work from his own child-like images and not from the adult conceptions of the teacher. Once he is able to put the whole of himself into whatever he is making or doing then he will derive the utmost benefit from his activity, however crude the external results may appear from an adult standpoint.

It is a good plan to arrange for the children to have at least one hour for Creative Play as soon as they arrive in the morning. Many of them come to school with an idea of what they would like to do, this is especially true as so much of their activity is influenced by the effect of incidents which have occurred within their environment. One will find in many instances that the children are making an attempt to understand their environment by externalizing these experiences through their activity. Each child has his own problems, some are the result of external circumstances over which he has no control and others arise from difficulties in his own nature. In homes where there is economic stress, harassed and overworked mothers or domineering, aggressive and uncontrolled parents, the

children can feel little sense of security. Other children suffer from the attentions of the over-indulgent or over-anxious parent, even the most fortunate of all cannot escape such anxieties as those caused by illness in the home or fears of the imagination common in some form or other to all children. In addition to these problems there are the little day-to-day irritations and difficulties which beset most children from time to time. To offset these feelings of anxiety, frustration and insecurity is another reason for having a Creative Play period as soon as the children arrive at school in the morning. If they can come into school and find the room prepared for them with a variety of materials and playthings, and if they have the freedom to experiment in their own way without being directed and expected to conform to a set of instructions, they can perhaps "work off" some of these feelings and so achieve a measure of serenity which helps them through the day.

It has been said that Activity should be the keynote of the Infant School, and if we really believe this theory and practise it in our schools we shall then find that it is through his activities that the child develops an interest in the academic skills. This interest, which has come from within the child and is part of himself, can help considerably in the process of acquiring the fundamentals of reading, writing and number, because it is through interest that the child has the desire to acquire further knowledge. Once he has this real desire to learn he is able to tackle the routine work with confidence. We cannot, then, draw a hard and fast line between creative activity and formal work in the acquiring of skills. In his creative activity we see where the natural interests of the child lie and if we, as teachers, keep alive our own creative side so that we are always aware not only of what the natural interests are but of where they might lead to, then the developing of these interests will provide a sound basis for much of our teaching. This in itself would seem to us sufficient reason for beginning the day with an activity period, for we feel that if this time for activity is followed by one of purposeful discussion between teacher and children then much of the day's work can develop from this excellent foundation.

Class Discussion

This time for discussion should be a most valuable part of the Creative Play period, but it is an aspect of activity work which needs most careful consideration and thought on the part of the teacher. When the room is cleared it is the usual procedure for the children to gather round the teacher, and to take turns to show to the rest of the class the result of their activity and to describe what they have been doing during the period. If the discussion is to be of real value, it should be about a group activity which embraces the teacher and the whole class, and not one in which individual children make isolated statements such as, "To-day I painted a picture," or, "This morning I have been playing in the house," while the others wait impatiently for their turn to make similar statements. The children should be encouraged to talk about their ideas and how they have carried them out and also of their difficulties and problems and how they have tackled them. If there is an atmosphere of spontaneity in the class then the other children will ask questions, make suggestions and criticize in a friendly way. The teacher can also make her contribution introducing each child and his work, making sure that the less confident ones are given an opportunity to take their part. She should be sure to give a liberal measure of appreciation before she or the other children offer constructive criticism.

Through class discussion the children develop a keen interest in the work of others and often further ideas are stimulated through this interest; sometimes a centre of interest involving a larger group, perhaps a whole class, will arise and develop from this sharing of experiences. It has been found too that the work of the children becomes much more purposeful and progressive as a result of the discussion, their thought is stimulated and not only do they become able to give criticism but to accept the criticism, suggestion and co-operation of their class mates. Another important aspect of the discussion is the opportunity it provides for the children to express themselves naturally in words, it gives them an opportunity to talk about something real when they have in their hands something

which they themselves have made and this gives them confidence to talk easily. Their speech becomes more fluent and then vocabularies increase and, inevitably, the vocabulary of the backward child is enriched by the speech of the more intelligent child. But to us one of the most interesting revelations of the class discussion is the vast amount of general knowledge and of factual information on a variety of subjects revealed by the children. This arises from the side trackings of the discussion when all the children are throwing out comments and making contributions from their own experience. It is here, too, that we can encourage an attitude of research, for obviously there are times at which both teacher and children reach a point when further knowledge must be sought from an outside source. This type of discussion can make a vital contribution to a child's education, and if skilfully handled it can be an exciting adventure for the teacher as well as the children, but one must realize that it is not an easy time in which the teacher can sit back and relax, it is an experience which demands all her ingenuity, intelligence, knowledge and creative ability. It is a time when all her teaching arts must be employed to the utmost of her capacity.

The Part of the Teacher

And so we come to the teacher and the part she has to play in the Creative Play period when the activity of the children is spontaneous and undirected. As we have suggested earlier, her first consideration is the collection and provision of adequate material and equipment, and the careful preparation of the room before the period. Such material as paint, clay, paste and glue should be kept in good condition and replenished when necessary so that the children can derive the utmost satisfaction from their chosen activity. Moreover, this careful preparation and organization beforehand makes it possible for the teacher to keep that calm serenity which is so necessary a part of her most important task, that of watching and studying the children in their play. If she is observing them in an unobtrusive way she will be ready to help and advise, to give a suggestion or a word of encouragement at the right moment and so,

for example, prevent a child with little manual dexterity from becoming disheartened and losing confidence by too many unsuccessful attempts to control the material being worked on. When the children need and ask for her aid she should be ready to co-operate with them and to help them to see further possibilities in their play or activity which may give them greater satisfaction. If she can do this without imposing her adult ideas, then she can often stimulate more creative effort and there will be a definite progression in the activity of the children at the different stages of their development. If a teacher is studying her children in this way, it will help her considerably to keep a record of her observations. We would suggest that a weekly record should be kept, the teacher bearing in mind the following points. She should -

Record any interesting piece of work or play on the part of an individual child or a group of children.

Notice the children's ideas, how they are stimulated, how they are carried out.

Record what she learns of them from the discussion.

Make notes on the children who have original ideas and little ability to carry them out and she should try to find out what helps them to improve.

Keep a particularly careful watch on the effortless children who do not know what they want to do and who seem to have an inability to play, on children whose play often tends to be aggressive or destructive, on children who concentrate for short periods only, and who go from one activity to another leaving everything unfinished.

Try to find out what are the difficulties of these groups of children. Careful observation of their play may reveal the nature of their problems and perhaps give some indication of how they can be relieved. When discoveries of this kind are made she can give the individual children concerned further opportunities for that kind of play which seems to help them most.

Notice when an intellectual, academic or any other interest arises through the play activities and record how these interests are followed up, where they lead to and what ground is covered through the development of them.

In observing her children and watching for evidence relating to these points a teacher will be surprised to find out for herself how many of the fundamental needs of her children can be fulfilled in this way, and it will give her a feeling

of satisfaction and increasing confidence in the rightness of the method she has chosen when she sees from this evidence how a sense of companionship grows through play, how a child who has always played alone gradually becomes one of a group, how the children come to set a standard for themselves, how they help each other, learning through their play not only to give and take and to settle their own problems, but the whole art of living together.



THE NATURAL PATHWAY TO LEARNING IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

A CHILD entering an Infants' School for the first time, at five years of age, may come directly from home or from a background enriched by attendance at a Nursery School. To each the experience is a new adventure, which may be more readily accepted by the Nursery School child than by one coming directly from home. In many instances, a brother, sister or friend already at school gives reassurance, which helps to banish any feelings of uncertainty that may arise.

Living experiences of home life and its ever widening environment cannot be dismissed by the new-comer to school. Nor, indeed, would the teacher of to-day wish them to be forgotten. She knows that these form the natural basis from which all learning naturally arises and through which knowledge is extended, understanding deepened and positive adjustment achieved.

A visitor to a modern Infants' School is seldom likely to find all the members of the entrants' class seated quietly at tables or desks, each endeavouring to follow and reproduce similar work as it is presented by their teacher. No real education can begin in this manner. The widely differing experience, knowledge and psychological development of each child demand individual opportunities for the carrying out of self-initiated, practical reconstructions of personally meaningful aspects of everyday life.

The Five-year-old at School

Most five-year-old children are essentially doers, eager to imitate, handle and construct. By such means, they relive their experiences and experiment with materials and situations of immediate interest, thereby gaining valuable knowledge and skills, which are fundamental to them in the process of education. Among these, the most outstanding are positive personal adjustment, increasing awareness of important

human relationships, clarity and fluency of speech, interest in listening to others and in entering into intelligent discussion with them, ability to concentrate alone and in association with others, according to the need of the moment, and, above all, a healthy desire to learn. Thus the path of learning is readily followed, because it arises from and extends a familiar and interesting background.

At the early stages, a fair amount of teaching may be undertaken with individuals or with small groups showing themselves ready for similar instruction. While this is in progress, the remaining members of the class will continue with their personal interests.

The School Background

It is necessary to make careful provision of suitable material for children working under these conditions, otherwise non-constructive action and waste of time may occur. The suggestions given below state minimum requirements, additions being made as teacher or children realize the need for them. Each type of material should be sufficient in quantity to permit of several children using it at the same time. The need for taking turns will, of course, arise when there is a large demand for any one kind of material, thereby, opportunity is given for good training in adjustment to the needs of others.

Material Required

Two types of material are necessary—

1. Objects similar to those used in everyday life, but somewhat smaller in size.
2. Raw materials, which do not in themselves represent actual objects or situations.

The following suggestions would be classed under Section 1.

The Children's House

This is best made of simple, movable screens, sufficiently high and wide to permit several children to busy themselves inside without being able to look over the top of the walls. For the sake of ventilation, a roofless house is better than a roofed one, and screen walls are preferable, as they are easy to store away when the house is not required. These walls can be

Minimum Requirements within the House

The Living Room A firm wooden table of suitable height, at least four chairs, a dresser and a cooking stove. The last two can be made from empty wooden soap boxes.

On the dresser a china or plastic tea-set, tea-pot, and one or two basins. Spoons of varying sizes are stored in a drawer or small wooden box. A tin in which to keep biscuits, etc.

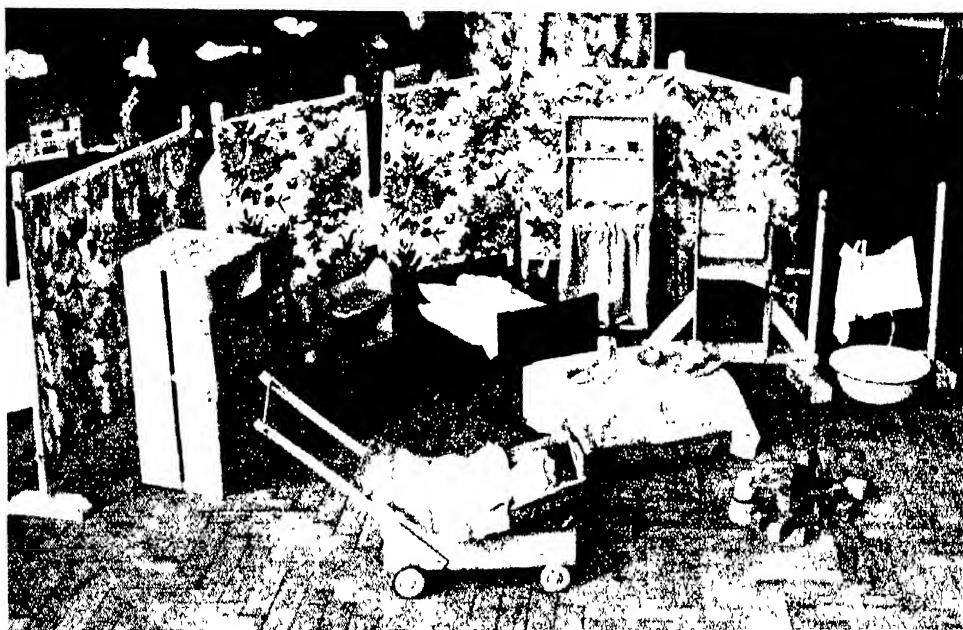


FIG. 1

A Children's House

made with lath wood frames, covered with hessian or other light-weight cotton material. Single screens need two wooden feet in order to remain upright. If screens are made in pairs that fold together when not in use, supporting feet are not required. Two pairs of screens are usually sufficient to form one room, especially if part of the school-room wall is brought into use.

A door should be made in at least one screen, having a knocker fixed at a suitable height on its outer side. A window is also necessary for each room. Short, attractive cotton curtains should hang at each window.

On the cooking stove a kettle, small frying-pan and saucepan.

On a small side table, or short form a washing-up bowl, enamel jug, soap and soap-dish. Hanging nearby, a small mop, washing-up cloth and drying cloth.

Cleaning Materials One long-handled soft broom, one dustpan and brush and dusters.

The Bedroom or Children's Room. Where space permits, this may lead out of the living-room, but may also be placed at some distance away, in a more convenient position.

Essential furniture should include the following: a suitably low dressing table, with a variety

of materials placed upon it; two or three dolls' beds, a box, with cover, in which to store dolls' clothes and one or two small dolls' dress hangers, a large bowl or small enamel bath, an enamel jug, and a small stand upon which to hang drying towels; soap, soap-dish and washing cloths, a low table, and one or two chairs of suitable height upon which children may sit when engaged in bathing their dolls. Two types of dolls' clothes are necessary, i.e. those for day wear and those for the night. Each bed should be furnished with suitable coverings and a pillow. A couple of prams would greatly add to the children's enjoyment of their dolls.

Washing Day

It is best to place the equipment in such a position that water is easily obtainable. On fine days, the work might with advantage take place out of doors.

Essential requirements include at least one firm, strong wooden table or flat oblong bench, upon which to place washing bowls, these may be of enamel or plastic. Soap, soap-dish and an enamel jug and bucket are necessary for washing and for carrying away used water. A clothes line and clothes basket enable drying and preparation for ironing to be carried out. A small iron, placed near a hot radiator or fire, would be warm enough for satisfactory pressing of washed materials. An ironing board or table is also desirable. Materials to be washed will include dolls' clothes, bed and pram covers, wiping-up cloths, curtains, etc.

It is not wise to limit washing to one day a week, many children experience a strong urge to wash and to handle water and achieve emotional stability after using it.

Shopping

The best type of shop for children of five to six years of age is a general store. It can be made by putting two orange boxes, one upon the other, and painting them an attractive colour. The boxes should be placed so that the inside of each faces away from the customers. They may be used for storing all goods for sale, or surplus goods, when the shop is closed.

Goods for Sale. These may consist of empty grocers' cartons and containers, familiar in the home. Much word recognition is likely to be gained by shoppers as they study the names on the outside of each carton. Towards six years of age, many children enjoy making plastic toys, cakes, etc., and placing them in the shop for sale.

A young five-year-old child does not necessarily look for a shop-keeper. The main interest, at first, consists chiefly in taking dolls for a walk, and calling at the shop, where goods are selected and placed in a shopping-bag or pram, before being taken to the children's house. Later, the various cartons are quietly returned to the shop. A child approaching six years of age usually likes to buy from the shop-keeper and to pay with cardboard money, but the giving of change may not be understood. If prices are marked in pennies and there is a supply of cardboard pennies available, much practice in adding is to be gained if payment is always made with the requisite number of pennies.

Material not in itself representative of Home or Immediate Environment

(a) *Wood blocks and bricks*, of varying shapes and sizes, ranging from a road block to half-inch bricks, which are more convenient for use on a table. Pieces of lath wood, of suitable width and length, should be available, as well as other building material required to make archways, window-ledges, etc. A number of empty wooden boxes, ranging in size from small packing cases to chalk boxes, provide material for making widely different and complex structures. The addition of toy cars, trains, buses, animals and human figures greatly adds to the variety, complexity and value of work carried out with the boxes and large bricks.

(b) *Plastic Material.* Both clay and "Plasticine" should be provided. Some children do not like the cold feeling of clay and work more satisfactorily with "Plasticine." Clay requires more attention than "Plasticine," if it is to be kept in good condition, but extra work involved is rewarded by the excellent representations made by children, who thoroughly enjoy their

work of modelling. The fact that clay may be painted with representative colours also gives particular delight to many children.

(c) *Sand*. A sand pit in the playground is to be desired, in addition to a sand table indoors. The following materials are useful for work with sand: suitably sized trowels or spoons, small buckets or enamel mugs, shells and pebbles. When possible, two sand tables should be provided, one containing dry sand and the other damp. The latter encourages the making of holes and tunnels, and, if variously shaped patty pans are available, children will enjoy pressing out shapes on the surface of the damp sand. Much counting and comparison are likely to arise in consequence.

(d) *Water Tray*. A deep sand tray on a table is suitable for this purpose. It should be kept about three parts full. The following articles are necessary for the children to use with water: enamel or plastic mugs or cups of varying sizes, spoons, funnels, objects which float or sink, such as wood and pebbles. Many children acquire considerable emotional stability from the use of water. At first, their reaction to it may be exercised in splashing water, but before long there arises a desire to use the varied equipment in it.

Mugs are dipped into the water, a small one to fill a larger, and the number of times the small one must be filled before the larger is quite full becomes a matter of keen interest. Later, it is discovered how many small mugs can be filled from one full large mug. Experiments in floating objects are also carried out, and before long, individual children will bring their own self-made toys and test them on the water to see whether they will float. On one occasion, a boy brought to the water tray the boat he had just completed in wood. On finding that it would not float, he returned to the wood-work table and, after four or five alterations and testings, he rejoiced with his friends when the little ship finally sailed steadily on the water's surface.

(e) *Woodwork*. Soft wood is essential for young children. Owners of wood yards or saw mills are usually happy to make a gift of off-cuts and odds and ends of soft wood when they understand what is needed and realize the good use children are able to make of them.

The following tools and equipment are necessary for the work—

Small hammers.

Tenon saws.

Nails in varied sizes and shapes.

A low bench or strong table upon which the work may be carried out.

Sawing-blocks and vices are not necessary for children under six years of age. The younger ones very much prefer to saw without them, possibly because they find such aids difficult to control.

(f) *Weighing Table*. A strong pair of table scales is best. They should be placed on a table specially set aside for weighing. Weights will include 1 lb, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb, 2 oz, and 1 oz. Material for weighing must provide opportunities for the weigher to discover differences in size or quantity of various materials which are of the same weight. Thus, not only should objects be measured by standard weights but also by the other types of objects.

Many young children find this latter method of weighing of far greater interest than measuring against a standard weight. Suitable material includes dried acorns, chestnuts and shells as light-weight objects, and these may be compared with pebbles and nails or small pieces of metal which are much heavier in relation to their size.

(g) *Painting*. Whenever possible, children should stand upright, with their paper mounted on an easel, when they paint. When this is not possible, the paper may be mounted along one side of the classroom wall. Although this is likely to lead to running colours if brushes are over-loaded with liquid, it is to be preferred to working on paper laid flat on a table.

Essential materials include—

Paper, which may be ordinary, unglazed kitchen paper, in whole or half sheets.

Powder paint of at least four colours, mixed with water, each in a glass pot (jam jars are suitable for the purpose).

Large paint brushes, one at least for each colour.

A number of colour pots, placed on a tray between two easels, will provide paint for the four children who are using both sides of each of the easels.

Children should not be told what to paint, but as the teacher expresses appreciation of work done, she can, by careful questioning, help each painter to discover worth-while aspects of the work both in colour and form.

(h) *Crayon and Pencil Drawing.* While engaged in drawing, it is best for the worker to sit at a table, on which both crayons and coloured pencils are available. Children interested in

the three R's. They also provide a degree of mental control for intelligent children, which is not experienced in their freer types of interest.

(j) *Nature Table.* If possible, this should be set near a door leading to the out-of-door world. On it, seeds, bulbs and plants will be grown in their season, flowers in vases should be labelled. Some animal life can also find a place here. An aquarium may be provided and, perhaps,



FIG 2

Measuring Water

representing detail frequently prefer to use pencils, as they usually find that they can work more effectively in this medium. As in the case of painting, every child occupied in this work should portray personal interests and not be directed as to subject. It is by this method that real development in observation and representation can best be achieved.

(i) *Table Occupations.* A variety of box puzzles, mosaics and table bricks are necessary for the use of children not yet ready for, or wishing to carry out, free creative work. These form an excellent background for later study of

butterfly eggs, etc. Each object on the table should be carefully labelled and kept in order by children working in turn under the guidance of their teacher.

Frequently, pictures are available which add to and extend the real-life interests of the children. A daily calendar should be kept and hung near the table. In addition, small, attractively illustrated nature books should be kept at hand, on or near the table.

(k) *Book Corner.* All the children's varied constructions, representations and discussions will eventually lead to this most important

corner, where the children can find pictures of many things which they have thought about and attempted to represent. The corner must be carefully and attractively arranged in a position where space and quiet are possible.

An empty table with chairs invites the taking of a book from the nearby shelf, to be enjoyed sitting comfortably, with it resting on the table. The simple, printed words will frequently be read by the teacher as she notes the child's

The Importance of Self-initiated Interests in the Education of Children of Five Years of Age

It is necessary to consider carefully the educational importance of the varied interests which five-year-old children follow spontaneously and gladly during their early schooldays.

Upon arriving at school in the morning, each child's mind is usually still directed towards



FIG. 3

Building with a Variety of Shaped Bricks

interest in a book. Later, the child who enjoyed the book is likely to recognize many words and read them with pleasure to a friend who also is becoming interested. If books are to be valued, it is important to select them with care. The first books must be clearly illustrated, with little background detail. Printing beneath or at the side of each picture should consist of only one word, either noun or verb. More advanced books will have a simple phrase beside a picture. As interest and ability in reading develop, more printed matter will naturally be welcomed, *but* old Christmas Annuals have no place in the library for five-year-old children. There are plenty of suitable books to be bought to-day, which exactly meet their needs and interests.

events in the home and to experiences out of school. Some find it difficult to pass from the home background to that of the school. There is so much that holds each child's attention that it is necessary to provide opportunity for individual working-out of problems and impressions, and using them as a natural background for school education. By such means, personal difficulties are likely to be surmounted and a better understanding achieved with a real desire to adjust and acquire both skill and knowledge. Thus, it seems best to permit this type of work to begin immediately upon each child's arrival at school in the morning.

Movement from cloak-room to classroom should be accomplished quickly and easily upon

arrival, and early comers assist the teacher in the arrangement of the materials to be used. They enjoy doing this. Individual choice of occupation may be governed by order of arrival, and children coming late may find their choice is not available. They should be given permission to engage in it as opportunity arises, either later in the morning or, if this is not possible, on another day. During the "choosing time" the teacher should not interfere unless appealed to

concerning soap and articles to be washed. Moving on, she meets Tim and Mary returning from a shopping expedition. They show the goods they have obtained and, with her help, read the name on each packet and count the number of paper plates they have bought for the party tea table. She passes to where much activity is in progress at the weighing table, and at the water and sand trays. Children happily explain what they are doing. John draws atten-

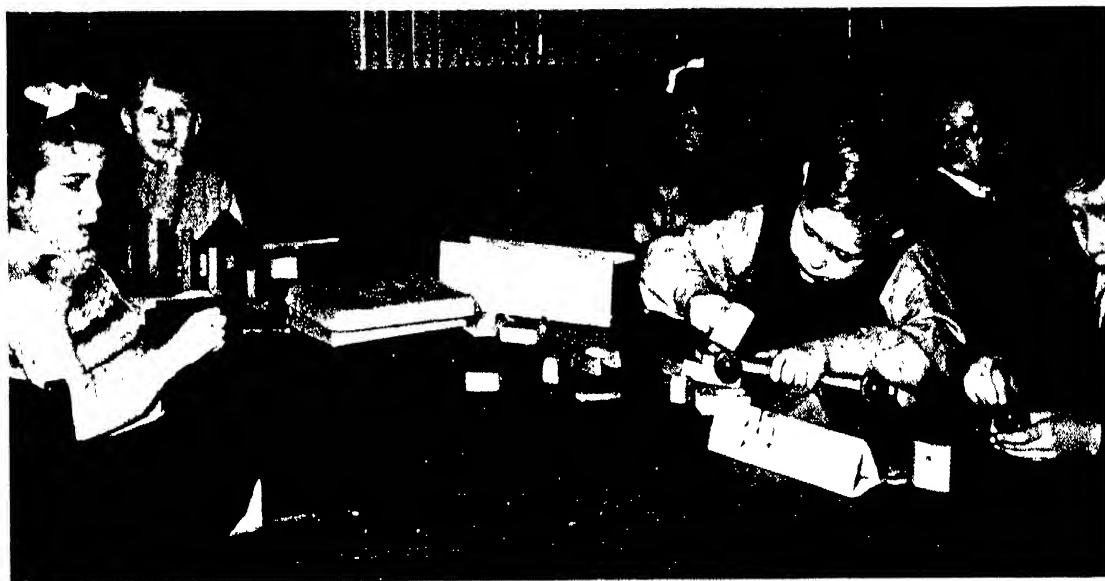


FIG. 4

Special Constructions with Bricks

for help, or if she feels that it is necessary to make suggestions. Children who find it difficult to settle may require special adult help and guidance.

Work in Progress

As soon as everyone is absorbed, the teacher should move quietly from group to group, but never lose awareness of the whole class for more than a minute or two at a time. She may call at the Children's House to inquire about the babies or to discuss details of a party which is in preparation. "How many are coming to tea?" she asks. "How many cups and plates do you need?" Nearby she notes three children engaged in the work of washing day and she inquires

tion to his weighing book, he says, "20 chestnuts weigh as much as 35 acorns." Meg shows that 4 small mugs of water are needed to fill one large mug. Standing around a table, a number of children are working with clay. Jill breaks her large piece into two, one small and one larger lump. She places the small lump on the larger one, then, with a stick, marks eyes, ears and nose. Others imitate her and soon a row of clay men stand side by side. "How many men?" asks the teacher. "One, two, three, four . . ." and on to twelve, they count. Bob says they are not all the same; some are small. He counts 7 big men and 5 small ones and states that 7 and 5 make 12 men altogether.

In the school hall, just outside the door of the classroom, a noise of hammering is heard.

Here, a group of four or five children are sawing wood and hammering nails into it. They tell the teacher that they are making aeroplanes, all except Mary, who shows a signal with a moving arm. She says that she has seen a signal like hers at the railway station. The teacher holds a piece of wood firmly, while Frank saws off the length that he needs.

Not far away is a group of easels. Here, six children are painting pictures; two are just painting one colour upon another and are thoroughly enjoying the resulting mixtures that appear as the paints run together. Others are painting houses, people and trees. Joan has put a policeman by the bus in her picture. She asks the teacher to write on her painting, "This is my Dad going to work." Jessie wants the words, "My Mum going to the shop" written on her picture. Interest in writing and reading is increasing daily in this group. Jim goes to the book table as soon as he has finished painting and the teacher follows him. Here they find four children already absorbed in looking at books. May and Clare look at one book together, Jim finds a book about ships. He asks the teacher to read the words printed beneath each picture. Then, replacing the book he goes to the drawing table and begins to draw a ship with coloured crayons. The teacher remains at the book table. There, May, who is nearly six years of age, reads aloud to her friend. When doubtful about a word, she turns to her teacher for help. Presently, she seeks a fresh book, and her listening friend takes the first book and goes through it with great care, reading aloud the words that she can recognize.

The teacher frequently directs children, engaged in other occupations, to a book which may help them in the work they are doing. Morley was engaged in building a house with small bricks, and had forgotten to leave open spaces to indicate windows. The teacher directed him to a book with a number of house pictures in it. After looking at these, he returned to his brick building and constructed more interesting houses.

Some children had chosen to sit at a table and draw pictures with coloured pencils. Jim went to the picture and word book hanging on the wall and, taking it to his table, he turned over

each page until he found the picture of a table with the word "table" written beneath it. Picking up a pencil, he copied the word beneath the table that he had drawn.

Thus, through their various interests, the children were developing a real interest in reading, writing and counting, each being related to meaningful, living situations, which they had created with differing types of material. Later in the day, those who showed themselves to be ready for reading worked together in a group with the teacher, while the remaining members of the class busied themselves with bead threading, picture dominoes and various types of puzzle.

Individual choice of occupation usually continues for about one and a half hours. Few children follow the same interest throughout the whole period. Some change but once, others rather more frequently. A sympathetic teacher is quick to note when her help is required to assist with a difficult job, to encourage development in new directions or to bring what is being done to a higher stage of completion.

Clearing Away. This must be carried out with great care. Finished or partly finished work must be put in a place of safety until required again. Each child will attend to personal work. Individuals and small groups then return unused material to its allotted storing place, and with small pans and brushes, they sweep up litter. Dirty hands are then washed and soon everyone is quietly seated, drinking mid-morning milk. Throughout this clearing up period, the teacher directs, overlooks and assists, but her chief aim lies in training the children so to care for their work and store unused material that they themselves can find whatever they require in good condition at any time.

Special Interests. Most children who work in the manner described here become interested in the efforts and productions of their companions. At times, individuals will leave what they are doing and, walking amongst their fellows, watch and ask questions about what they see in progress. Sometimes a child with few ideas will join a group and contribute to their work, as in house-keeping or clay modelling. This is permitted if the group of children who are the initiators of the interest are willing to accept the new-comer.

Discussion Periods

It is usual to set aside a short period of about fifteen minutes each day, during which teacher and children gather together. Seated comfortably, they look at and chat about each other's work. Tom shows the bus he has made with a box. He points to the driver's seat and the platform, where people get on and off. He is asked, "How many people ride on your bus?"

development. At no time should work done by a five-year-old child be condemned. Shy children need friendly encouragement from both teacher and companions. Informal chats, carried out in happy co-operation, can do much to help individual shyness to disappear and to encourage greater effort. Children should never be compelled to use any particular type of material during their individual choice period. Given time, all normal children find the best medium

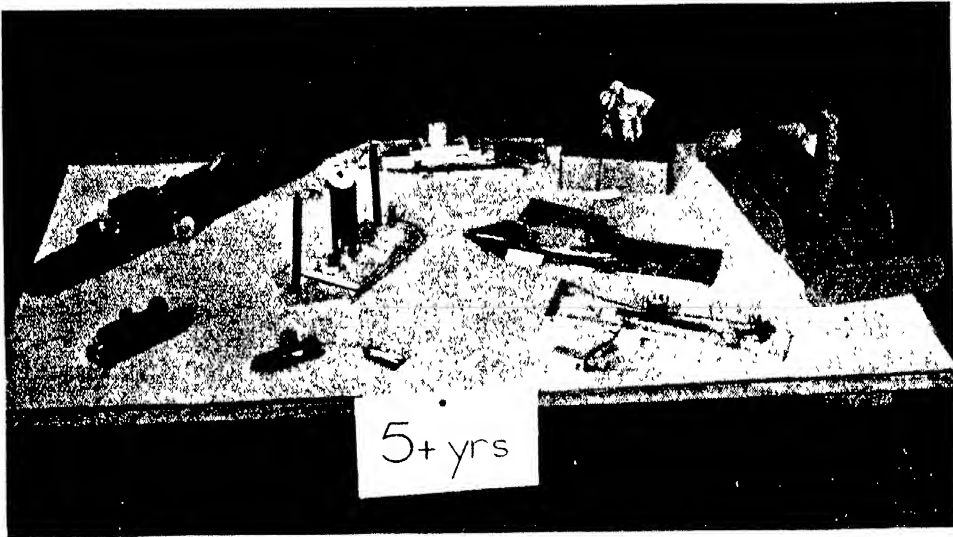


FIG 5

Toys made with Wood, Empty Boxes and Other Material

"Where is it going?" Jessie brings her painting and reads the words that she asked the teacher to write on it. "My Mum is going to the shop." Three more children show their paintings. Frank brings his aeroplane and says that he made it with two pieces of wood, which he cut with a saw. The children count the nails he hammered in to join the wings to the body of the plane. There is not time for everyone to show individual accomplishments, but all the work is so placed in the room that at convenient moments children can look at different objects and talk about them with their friends. Opportunity is also made for every child to show and chat about personal work at least twice a week.

It is important to encourage less skilful workers by allowing them to talk about their work and, while doing so, receive help for further

for self expression, and also overcome a shyness which at first prevents them from chatting happily about their work.

Children of Six to Seven Years of Age

Between six and seven years of age, most children make a considerable amount of progress. The five-year-old child's absorbing interest in events of everyday home life is apt to lessen as the child gets older, and be replaced by concentration on an ever-widening environment of streets, entertainments, excursions and visits. Many boys are drawn particularly to the study of various forms of transport, amongst which aeroplanes, old and new, large and small, frequently take first place.

Dramatic Activities

Increasing ability to observe, speak and imitate in sound and action inspires a number of children to reproduce their personal impressions through dramatic presentations.

These are particularly valuable at this time, as they frequently aid individual emotional adjustment and provide opportunities for co-operation with others in planning and carrying through plays of a simple type. They also encourage the development of fluent expression through both movement and speech.

Property Box. This is essential. Many six-year-olds are extremely shy and yet readily express themselves when attired in costume. The following clothes and material are desirable—

- One or two adult skirts, scarves and aprons.
- Old dressing-gowns.
- Old handbags and shopping bags.
- Nurse's apron and cap.
- Postman's hat and bag.
- Bus conductor's hat, ticket holder and punch.
- Cowboy hat, shirt and chapes.
- Indian head-dress
- Policeman's outfit.
- An assortment of hats.

Lengths of various types of material are also highly appreciated, because they can be wound round head or body in a variety of ways. Additions such as crowns, sceptres, Indian head-dresses and weapons should be made by children when they wish to use them. Stiff cardboard is useful for the making of such properties.

Preparation of a Play. The subject for presentation should never be suggested by the teacher, but she must be ready to respond and give advice when appealed to for help. Her contribution should be of such a nature that it leads the would-be actors to think further and plan more carefully.

A shy, retiring boy may don the costume of a cowboy or red Indian and, while thus attired, act out, with a fair degree of energy, attributes which he associates with the character. Expressions of this type frequently help the individual to resolve emotional difficulties and attain a fair degree of stability and happiness. This is especially so when the teacher and

children respond to the presentations with appreciation and expressions of approval.

Various Ways by which Dramatic Representation may be Developed and Presented

While individual children may prefer to simulate a character alone, many more enjoy uniting in small groups. Not infrequently, a simple play develops spontaneously. Thus, on one occasion, Jane put on a long skirt and, taking a shopping bag in hand, remarked loudly, "I'm going to catch a bus and go shopping." Immediately, Frank decided that he also would go shopping and, placing a sailor hat on his head, he walked by her side. As they walked, he asked "What shall we buy?" Soon both children stood still and Frank said "Here is the bus stop, we must wait here." At that moment Joe came by and, hearing the remark, he began to imitate the noise of a car engine. "Here is the bus," he called, "I'm the conductor, get in, get in." Frank and Jane immediately arranged themselves behind him. Then, raising his hand and making the noise of a bell, he cried "Now we're off, now we're off, pay your fares, pay your fares." Turning to the two passengers, he carried out the act of selling and clipping a ticket for each. Then on moved the bus until it reached the school general store. "Get off here, get off here," cried the conductor. Immediately the two passengers left the bus and Joe disappeared amongst the other children. As Frank and Jane walked to the shop, Frank said, "We musy buy some shoes." At the shop, the two children looked at the various goods for sale. Shoes seemed to be forgotten. Jane bought a piece of pink ribbon, and then walked away. Frank did not buy, but he lingered at the shop, studying its contents for some minutes before he finally left to join a group of boys who were engaged in building with bricks.

Between six and a half and seven years, children enjoy planning a play before it is presented. Parts are accepted by individuals and each selects an appropriate costume. Rehearsals take place and frequently, after one or two rehearsals, with the help of the teacher the play is written down and learnt by the actors.

The Stage. At first, this does not seem to be required, but as children approach seven years of age, they realize the importance of having a stage. Some schools have excellent stages, as permanent fixtures in their Assembly Halls. These are useful for the presentation of special plays, particularly when outside visitors attend the performances. The stage for everyday plays is best made by the actors. The following "properties" are necessary for the purpose: two back-stage screens, between which actors leave and enter, two screens to place across the stage front when it is closed, and one or two chairs, a table, etc., as may be required. Seats for the "audience" are then arranged so that all can see and a ticket box is placed close to them, tickets being sold as the audience come to their seats. Tickets and cardboard money may be made by the children who have undertaken to look after the needs of the audience. When the play is over, these children will clear away all things pertaining to the audience, while the actors store their screens. Thus, an open clear space is left for other kinds of activity, which may be resumed now that the play is over.

The Selection of a Play

This requires careful thought and arrangement. An adapted story, or a familiar scene from street or home life, may be chosen. If it is long with a number of parts, it will be necessary to write it down, and for each actor to make a copy for individual use. One child amongst the actors usually leads during rehearsals and helps others who are in difficulties. Shortly before, and during the play presentation, a prompter is likely to be of great help.

Puppetry

Children in the Infants' School thoroughly enjoy a puppet show. Those above six and a half years of age frequently desire to make a puppet and use it themselves. It is best for them to begin with a glove puppet. These can be made easily and attractively with odds and ends of material. At first, much delight is experienced in just holding the puppet on the right hand and making it dance, jump, bend and

perform various types of movement. Later, simple stories can be presented. Before long, the puppet-makers will feel the need for a special stage. Much help for this work can be obtained by young children from a small book entitled *Simple Puppetry for Children*, published by Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Limited. This book gives details of the making of several types of glove puppets and of how to make a suitable stage, it also explains how plays may be developed from stories, or from the children's own experiences. It is written throughout in simple English and carefully illustrated.

Shops and Shopping

Interest in shopping expands to a considerable degree during this year. At first, a general store is found to be quite satisfactory. A shop-keeper and cardboard money are essential to the process of buying and selling. Particular seasons and events, such as Christmas, Easter and Birthdays, are likely to lead to the setting up of an extra department or an entirely new shop. Goods for sale may include greetings cards, presents and home-made postcards. The materials and ribbons, required for puppets, or for the making of small gifts, such as handkerchiefs, handbags and purses, small paper dolls, etc., should also be available.

Keeping Shop. Whether the shop be in the classroom or the school hall, outside it a list of goods for sale should hang, showing the price of each item. There should also be a card, stating times of opening and closing the shop. If two clock faces are available, one of these could show the opening time and the other the time of closing.

Scales for weighing and weights need to be close at hand; also a yard tape measure for the sale of lengths of tape and ribbon. Tape may be dyed various colours to match pieces of material suitable for making bags, dolls' clothes, badges, etc. Greetings cards for various occasions can be made by drawing and painting on stiff paper or thin cardboard.

Buying and Selling. Each shopper should receive from the shop-keeper a written statement, comparable to a bill, after purchases have been made. At first, it is wise to allow only two

things to be bought at one time. This will enable both buyer and seller to check bills quickly and easily. Thus, a girl's bill might show—

| | |
|--------|-----|
| Doll | 6d. |
| Pencil | 3d. |
| — | — |
| | 9d. |
| — | — |

and a boy's bill—

| | |
|--------|-----|
| Top | 5d. |
| String | 3d. |
| — | — |
| | 8d. |
| — | — |

made by the children, should be kept by the teacher and distributed each day. The money might be stored in a closed wooden box, known as the "Bank." Every morning, each child should write on paper the amount of money personally required and take it to the teacher or to the child in charge of the bank. There an exchange of the request paper (a slip on which the amount drawn is stated) and money should take place.

In the series of Classroom Pictures and Charts published by the New Era Publishing Company, there are a number of useful charts dealing with simple shop-keeping and also a chart of weights

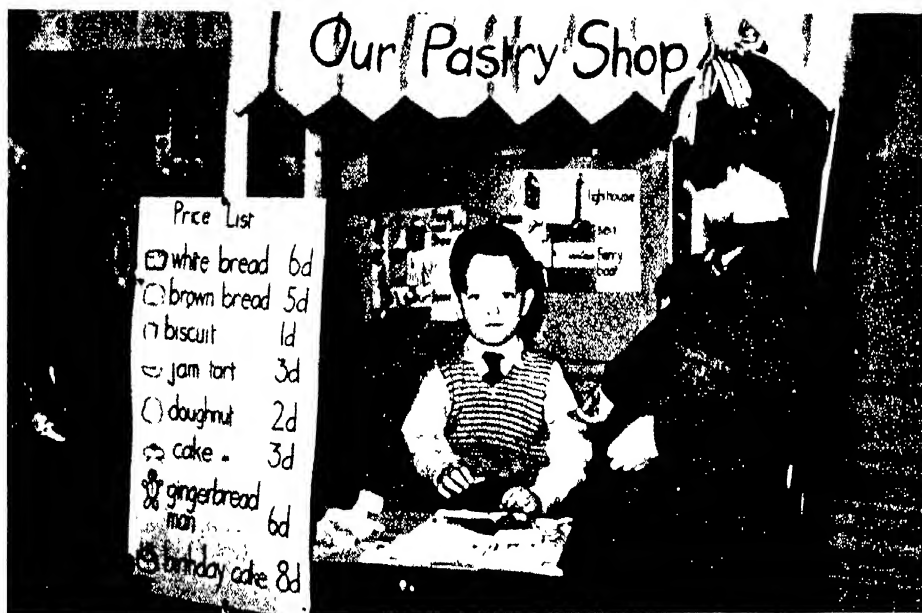


FIG. 6

Six-year-old Children at their Baker's Shop

As the child's ability to add money and give change increases, bills will become longer, because more goods will be bought at the same time. Tape and materials will be measured and sold by the inch, and in lengths of one quarter, half and full yard lengths. More than one shop-keeper will be required at a time as business becomes brisk. A weekly list of shop-keepers would ensure that all who wish to carry out this work get their turns in rotation.

Checking Money Spent and Taken. A fairly large supply of cardboard money, preferably

and measures and another of money, which both teacher and children would find invaluable for reference.

At the beginning of the session, shop-keepers for the day should bring their money box to the bank and, when it has been filled with money, write on paper the amount they have received. Amongst the day's shop-keepers there should be a boy and girl nearing the top of the school who can check the money when received and record the amount. Otherwise the teacher must do this part of the work. At the end of each session,

all bills would be brought to the bank, together with money remaining in the shop till. Whenever possible, bills should be totalled and the final amounts of the day's takings written on a shopping sheet and placed where all the children can see it. This practical work with money will



FIG. 7

Toys made from Wood by 6- to 7-year-old Children

stimulate interest in written records, especially in children approaching seven years of age.

Post Office

The occurrence of birthdays and other festivals such as Easter and Christmas naturally leads to

the desire to send invitations, greetings cards, and small gifts. Children over six and a half years of age will find the organization and management of a school Post Office particularly interesting. The Post Office is best set up in the School Hall, where it can be frequently seen and used by all members of the community. An attractively planned Post Office is shown in the New Era Pictures and Charts Series.

Work in the Post Office. A competent, interested staff is essential. At ordinary seasons, two are probably sufficient, but at busy times such as Christmas, or shortly before a play presentation, the staff would need to be increased to at least four: two at the stamp counter and two weighing parcels. Letter sorters are also necessary; this work might be done by two "postmen," who, after sorting, deliver letters throughout the school.

Most of the post office work must, of necessity, be carried out by children who are able to deal with the selling of stamps, postcards, etc., and are quick to add and to give change. They must also be competent in the weighing of parcels. Thus the work of keeping the Post Office should be looked upon as a reward for achievement in these two kinds of arithmetical measurement. Less advanced children can quite well act as assistants in the sorting and delivering of letters. They can also help in sorting and pasting used stamps on sheets of paper, ready for sale to customers. This type of work will help them to become familiar with stamps of different prices and with the addition of money. The value of each sheet is written on the back of the sheet before it is passed on to the Post Office for sales.

As in the case of the shop-keepers, Post Office officials should total and hand in their takings each day after closing-time. A rubber stamp will be needed for stamping letters, cards and parcels. An ordinary small rubber stamp is suitable for this purpose. Animal stamps would be enjoyed and might be changed each month.

Post Office Savings Department. In order that children not participating in the school's savings scheme may draw the attention of parents to this form of saving, children in the highest class of the school, who are participants, may pay their weekly savings to their teacher as she sits at the counter of the school Post Office.

Time Keeping. Post Office opening and closing times should be written clearly on a card and placed where they may be seen, close to the office. In addition, a number of clearance-time cards will be needed for the pillar box.

Special Home Interests

Sewing equipment will be required for children who wish to adapt material, as, for example, for costumes for plays, etc. In addition, there is

should be encouraged to use a tape-measure to ensure good form and size in a finished article. Many boys enjoy sewing and produce excellent results. They should not be discouraged and led to feel that needlework is for girls only.

The Art of Cooking

This work is enjoyed by both girls and boys. Opportunity to engage in it might be provided once or twice a week, especially for the older

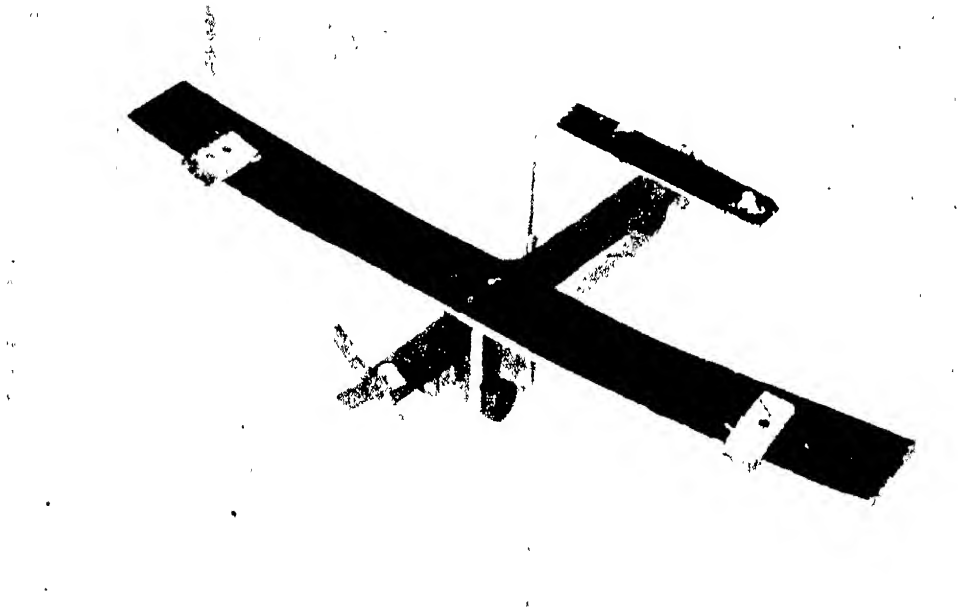


FIG. 8

Aeroplane made to given Measurements by a 7-year-old Boy

likely to be a number of children who enjoy cutting out and making simple doll's clothes, handbags, handkerchiefs, scarves, belts, etc. *The sewing box or basket* should be equipped with sewing cottons and silks in a variety of colours, and also some embroidery thread, thimbles, scissors and one or two measuring tapes. Material to be sewn should be in a special box. A box divided into three sections will be found helpful, if it is desired to separate cottons, woollens and silks; each section should hold only one type of material. A separate box for each may, however, be preferred. Considerable care is necessary in the storing and keeping of materials. Workers

children of the school. Small groups, consisting of not more than four children, are best for beginners. If the number wishing to cook is large, groups should be changed until all have enjoyed the experience, after which new groups can be formed. It is well to arrange for a reserve of biscuits and small cakes to be made by the children, and to have them available for special occasions. At first the teacher must supervise all that the cooks do. Later, her supervision would be slight, except when things are being placed in or taken out of the oven. *At such times her full and careful assistance and supervision are essential.*

Cooking Materials

The following articles of equipment and utensils are necessary, if satisfactory results are to be obtained—

A clean wooden table of suitable size and height.

One or two strong bowls, in which to mix ingredients.

Scales and weights (1 oz, 2 oz, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb, 1 lb).

Jugs to hold water and milk.

One or two basins in which to wash currants, etc., or whisk eggs.

An egg whisk.

Pastry boards and rolling pins of suitable size.

Wooden spoons for mixing ingredients.

A small flour bin.

Tins in which to store sugar, currants, etc.

Small tins or patty pans in which to bake buns.

One or two flat tins upon which to bake biscuits.

Biscuit cutters.

Liquid measuring glass.

Aprons for cooks to wear while at work.

Large bowl and cloths for washing and wiping when work of making is finished.

A dresser or cupboard shelf nearby, in which to store materials when not required.

Ingredients. While a small amount of flour and sugar might be stored at school, it would be well if children whose turn it is to cook brought most of the required ingredients from home. Later, each child should take home a sample of the cooking. These samples will pleasantly serve the double purpose of creating at home interest in the child's work and facilitate the continuance of material supplies from the parents.

Preparations. Four children, working individually or in pairs, might work side by side at the same table.

A simply stated recipe should be read aloud, either by one of the cooks or by the teacher, and then placed on the table. The recipe will have been decided upon at least one day before the actual work is to be done. This will allow time for gathering together the necessary ingredients.

At first, all cooks will follow the same recipe; later, when proficient, each would follow a personally selected one.

Arrangement of Materials. Having carefully studied the recipe, each cook fetches a mixing bowl and places it in a suitable position, together with other necessary tools and utensils, these being placed by the bowl.

Weighing Materials. The ingredients required, such as flour, butter, sugar, currants, etc., will be put near the scales. Each cook will then carry out the weighing of at least one ingredient, if it is to be shared. When two scales are available and four children are working in pairs, each pair will weigh out the quantity of each ingredient that it requires. At first the teacher should overlook all weighing and see that the materials are properly placed in the mixing bowls, the flour being rubbed through a sieve. When liquid is required, measuring of the right quantity must be carried out with considerable care. The liquid is then added by one cook while her companions stir the mixture. All might take turns in doing this.

Preparing Biscuits for the Oven. The dough, when of the right consistency, might be halved, and each cook would then roll a half-quantity on a well-floured pastry board. After cutting the dough with biscuit shapers, the cook transfers the biscuits with a flat cooking-knife to a greased and floured oven shelf or tray.

Placing in the Oven. The cooks should then carry their tray to the school oven, but not actually touch it. *The placing of trays in the oven must always be carried out by the teacher, with the children standing well back and watching. She should also open the oven and remove trays when baking is complete.*

The cooks must take special notice of the time when the baking process begins and watch carefully for the time when it ends.

Storing. After cooling, biscuits or buns should be stored carefully in air-tight tins until required.

Cooking Recipes. For first attempts, the teacher should provide a good standard recipe which can bear a fair amount of over-handling during the preparation period. Later, when skill has been developed the children should be encouraged to bring simple recipes from home.

The Cookery Book. Each successful recipe

might be written in a special school Cookery Book by the child who brought it to school. It will then be available for use at all times. Individual recipe books could be made by children wishing to possess them. Such children would, of course, be free to copy from the School Book.

Brick Buildings

Building with large bricks and lengths of wood absorbs the attention of many children between six and six and a half years of age. The structures they make differ somewhat from those made by the five-year-old, in that they tend to be larger and fitted out with more detail. When completed, they are usually used more effectively in imitation of real-life experiences.

House building requires more than screens for both outer and inner walls, and given sufficient space, the six-year-old boy will carefully lay brick course upon brick course, until the wall reaches as high as he can comfortably continue to work it. Spaces are left for windows, sufficiently large to be looked through. When available, flat lengths of wood are used for tops of windows and door supports, while a roof of flat wood or straw board is laid over laths, which reach from wall to wall. The chief interest of these workers lies in building, rather than in living in, their house. They do, however, often improvise furniture with empty wooden boxes and, not infrequently, a boy will bring a battery and one or two electric bulbs, with necessary flex, and place a lighting system within the house. This is usually done with help from an interested father.

Transport

Large bricks and empty wooden boxes are also used for the construction of a bus. When the bus is completed to the builders' satisfaction, they take turns in acting as bus conductor and driver. A number of children may soon decide to become passengers and seat themselves inside the bus. Before long, conductor, driver and passengers co-operate in the making of a ticket holder, tickets and cardboard money. A conductor's hat is also found.

With the toy ticket clipper, the work of buying and selling tickets proceeds with great earnestness. Each passenger alights when told to do so by the conductor. As they leave, the bought ticket is dropped into a special box. Later, conductors and drivers add the value of these and compare it with the fares that have been paid. At first the exact amount of fare is tendered, but soon the need for change is realized, and definite teaching is welcomed by all interested passengers and bus men. In addition, large Fare Sheets are made. The names of well known places are written in order, with fare from one point to another clearly marked.

Further Constructions with Various Types of Material

Most boys and many girls at this period of school life delight in using tools and easily-worked materials to construct familiar objects. So great is this interest apt to be that it becomes necessary to arrange a programme for taking turns, and thus ensure that everyone who wishes is given an opportunity to begin and complete a much desired object.

Woodwork

Whereas the five-year-old wood-worker just saws, hammers and nails wood together, deciding, when finished, what the final result is to be named, six-year-olds usually know beforehand what to make and seek suitable material to carry out the project. Wood is selected and sawn to suitable size and shape, and then carefully nailed into position to form aeroplanes, carts, windmills and a variety of other objects of momentary interest. Empty wooden boxes are greatly valued. Additions made to them result in usable carts, trolleys, etc. As the workers' skill develops, they begin to realize the importance of a measure graded in half, quarter and whole inches. This is evident in the carefully planned work shown in the illustration (Fig. 8) which shows an aeroplane, the achievement of a boy just seven years of age. Careful selection and preparation of material, and placing of parts, indicate a growing interest in proportion and detail. Books, illustrating their work and

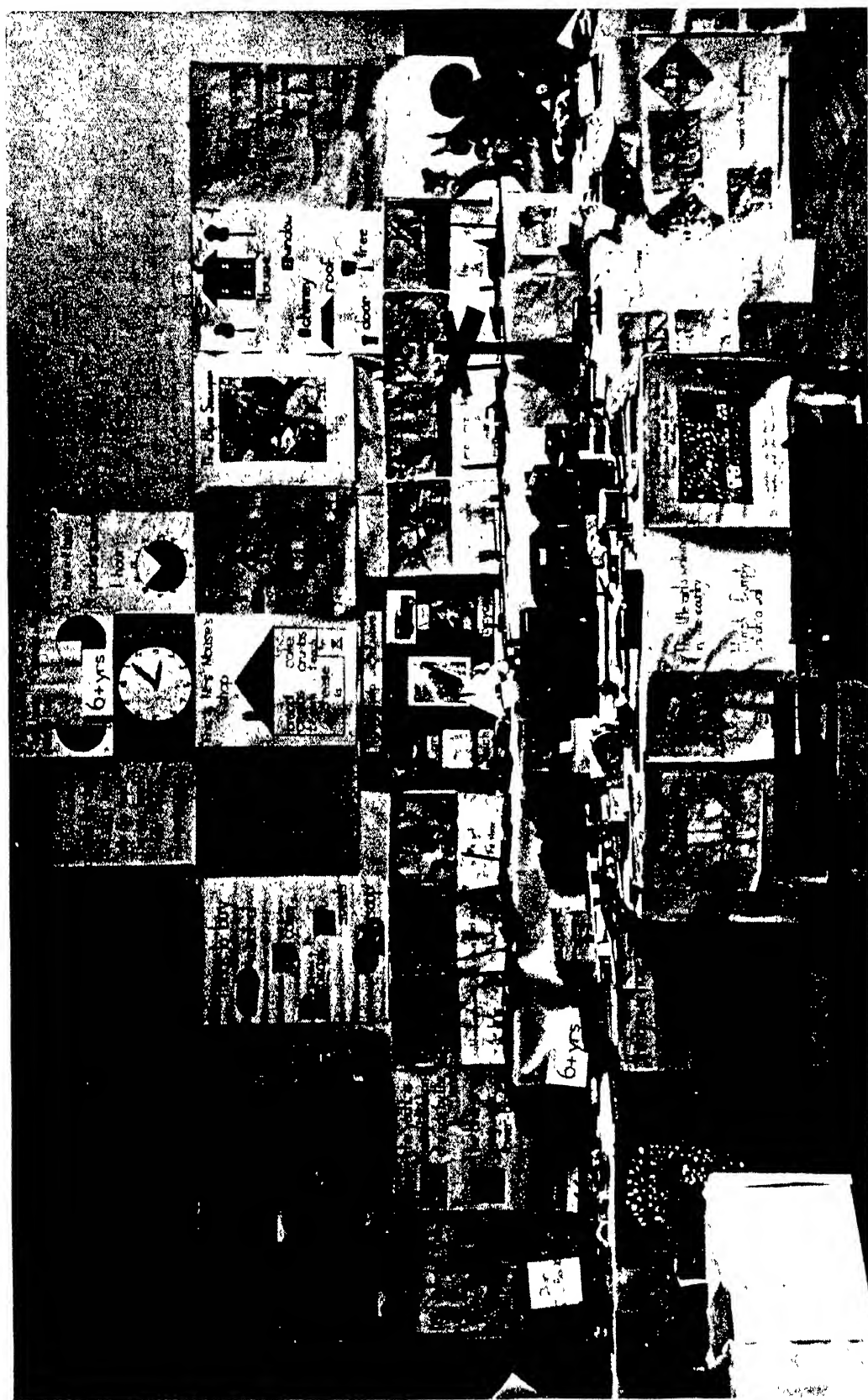


FIG. 9
*Constructions in Wood, Clay and Cardboard by Children
aged from 6 years to 6 years 10 months*

giving brief accounts of parts, are studied with concentration by groups of children, and the aid of the teacher is sought when the printed material is beyond their reading ability.

Sewing Materials

These are required for a variety of purposes. Boys frequently need such things as sails for boats, flags for forts, head-dresses of various kinds, etc. Sometimes a girl is asked to carry out a sewing job or she offers her help to others engaged on a task which interests her. Co-operation of this kind is good, and when no stress is laid on the idea that sewing is more particularly an occupation for girls, many boys enjoy giving time to the work and value what they make. This attitude should be encouraged.

Essential materials include a strong work basket or box, carefully fitted with each type of thread and needle, the latter being kept in a needle case. Space must also be found for thimbles and two or three pairs of scissors. Sewing thread should vary in strength, from fine cotton and silks to strong linen thread, scissors should also vary in size and strength and be within the worker's ability to manipulate.

A second box must be reserved for the storing of lengths of material. It might be arranged in compartments, each allotted to different types of material. Sometimes it is possible to have two or three suitably sized boxes each set aside for the holding of a particular kind of material.

Useful materials include patterned cottons for doll's clothes, plain coloured cottons and pieces of linen for handkerchiefs, thicker and stronger cotton and linen, suitable for bags, sails, etc. Short lengths of silk and woollen material are a welcome addition. It is necessary to see that each contribution is clean before it is placed in its appropriate storing place. All sewing materials should be carefully examined, cleaned and tidied at regular intervals. Some children, both boys and girls, find this a most interesting and satisfying occupation.

Modelling

Clay is a better medium than "Plasticine" for children of six to seven years of age. This is

particularly so when the worker is engaged in modelling a single object, such as an animal or person. "Plasticine" is sometimes preferred if the resulting figure is to be placed in a group model, such as a street or dock. It is less likely to break than a clay figure.

Many children approaching seven years of age become extremely interested in modelling fairly large representations of animals and people. Some prefer to leave the finished work in the natural grey of the clay, while others are not satisfied until the application of colour makes them work take on a more naturalistic appearance. This is such a personal matter that it should be left entirely to the worker to decide. No suggestion or direction should be made by the teacher.

Box Toys

A good collection of empty boxes, of widely different sizes and shapes, is valued by the younger six-year-olds and also, for special purposes, by those nearing seven years of age. These should include empty match boxes, small cartons, shoe boxes, and also date boxes, which are especially welcomed for the making of boats and buses.

Group Interests

Many children are strongly individualistic. They respond to and co-operate eagerly with an adult who shares their particular interest, but do not work readily with children of their own age. Five-year-olds frequently work sitting side by side, using the same material and sometimes making the same type of toy, but they seldom unite, or play together with their toys. Their final constructions are largely individualistic. This tendency is to be approved because it fosters individual observation, decision and effort. Differences should be noted and approved.

Between six and seven years of age, children engaged in their self-initiated interests frequently choose to sit side by side, each making the same kind of object. As they work, they become aware of one another's needs and give help when a difficulty arises. Thus John and Bob, both a little over six and a half years of age, worked side by side, each engaged in constructing a

boat. Presently, Bob experienced difficulty in sawing a piece of wood, because he could not hold it sufficiently steady as he sawed. John became aware of this, left his work and held the wood until the necessary sawing was completed. A few days later, Bob brought a piece of round dowel, and shared it with John when they both wished to set up masts in their boats.

Towards Seven Years of Age

Spontaneous collaboration amongst a group frequently arises when a number of children become interested in a particular object, or group of objects, that have been made by individuals working alone. One day Margaret brought a shoe box to school and made it into an attractive house with a sloping roof, chimney, windows and front door, which opened outwards. When it was completed, she placed it on a window sill and, during the subsequent discussion, said that her house was in a street, the name of which was well known to all the children.

Next day, Tom made a 'bus with a smaller cardboard box, and, at the end of one period, said to Margaret "I will put my 'bus in the street outside your House." This was done, and before many days had passed, so great a number of contributions were added to the street, that it became necessary to place the whole group on a large table. From then onwards, some dozen children worked steadily to develop the life of the street. Not only did houses, shops, vehicles and people begin to find a place there, but also a bridge, with a river flowing under it, and later, a railway station. Altogether, the group worked on this street for about four weeks. During this time they collected pictures of objects and events in the street, mounted them on paper and wrote a caption beneath each picture. The sheets were fastened together in the form of a book and given the title "In Our Street." When the street had to be cleared away, each contributor took his or her work home, but the book was put into the classroom library, where it was available for all members of the class. Not everyone in the class contributed to this particular study. A number of children worked alone on their own projects, others worked in

smaller groups. Throughout, a lively interest was shown, by most members of the class, in the productions of others.

During discussion periods, comments were made, difficulties discussed and excursions, which had inspired ideas, were described. As a result, contributions to help others were frequently brought from home, especially in the form of illustrated books, which showed essential details.

Painting

Much interest is usually shown in the painting of pictures. Frequently they are required for the background of a special group study. The standard of work often reaches a high level, painters devoting a considerable amount of time to the development of individual pictures. Sometimes one finds, usually the result of an adult influence, a child who paints a background of sky from the top edge of the paper right down to earth and house level. Such a practice is apt to spoil what is otherwise an excellent piece of work. The blue paint representing the sky is laid on thickly and darkly, giving a final suggestion of midnight darkness. It is well to remember that the natural space immediately above people, houses, etc., is not dark blue and, indeed, is frequently quite transparent and almost colourless. It seems best not to suggest painting the sky in every picture, but individual spontaneous attempts should not be discouraged. Help might be given by drawing the attention of the painter to the immediate surrounding sky and pointing out its gradations of colour.

Drawing with Crayons and Coloured Pencils

Many children prefer to work with these, rather than with paint. This is particularly so when book illustration is being done. Such materials enable the worker to give more detail in structure than can be achieved with paint. The picture of a ship in tow, drawn by John at six years ten months, shows the high degree of work that can be achieved with these materials.

Last night I
went to sunshine
corner and it
was about a ship
and all what they
do in it.

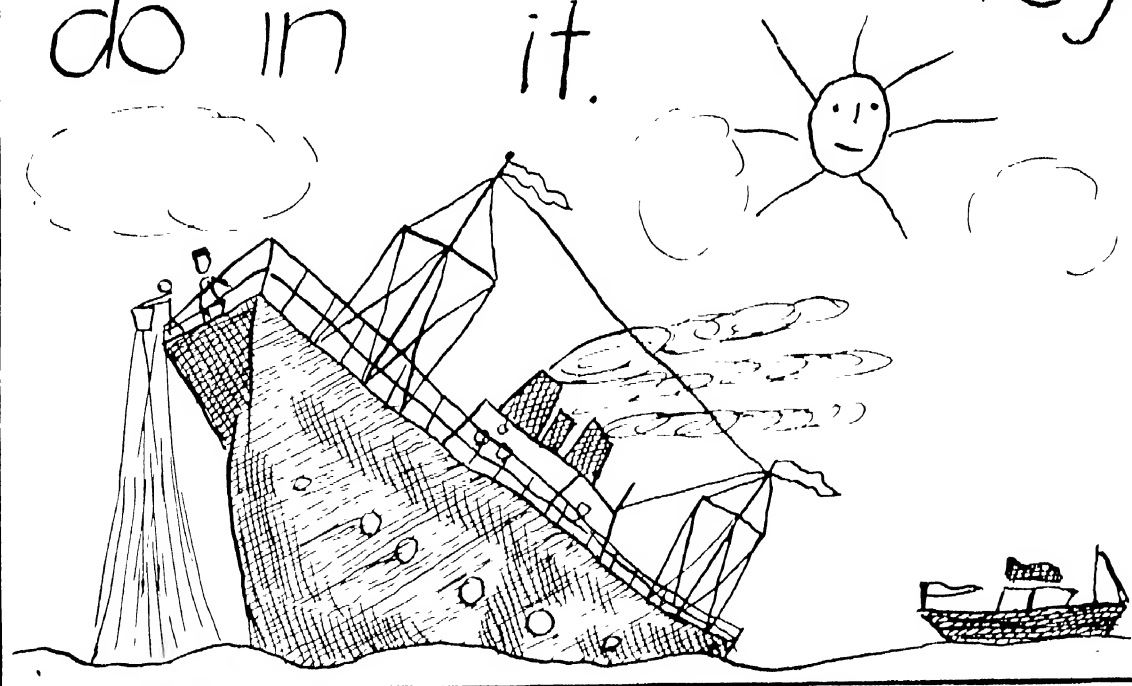


FIG. 10

Writing and Drawing by John aged 6 years 10 months

The Classroom Library

This should be one of the most important centres of the classroom. The interests of children between six and seven years of age are rapidly widening, and books which illustrate and

It is well to bear in mind that children are not as interested in the doings of other children as they are in events of the adult world in which children can participate. Two types of book need careful consideration—



FIG. II

Making use of a Picture Dictionary

extend their knowledge are greatly valued. At first, illustration, especially when naturally coloured, is more important than letter press. After six and a half years of age, the need for printed accounts and stories should increase. Whenever a new book, or several new books, are placed in the library, they should be introduced by the teacher to the whole class, one at a time, when all are sitting together ready to listen and enjoy the introduction.

1. Those which picture and describe, simply and briefly, such things as trains, aeroplanes, buses and animals, especially those of the zoo; men and women engaged in work and wearing attractive uniforms, stories about special pets, such as dogs, cats and birds. These latter belong, perhaps, to the second type.

2. Simply written and naturalistically illustrated stories about everyday events in the home and street, visits to the sea, zoo, woods

and countryside; and also stories which describe children engaged in their various interests.

The main trend of all these books should be realistic. Many publishers of children's books are producing such books to-day. They should be selected with care and find a place in the school library of the age group for which they have been printed. Some teachers fear that

Personal Books. These give special pleasure to their makers. Five-year-old children usually write about their particular wishes or experiences. Six- and seven-year-olds do so too, but they also write personal books about the work they are doing or have completed. These books should be shown to all members of the class group and left in the classroom library for



FIG. 12

*Six-year-old Children Writing freely and Using
Picture Dictionaries to help them in Spelling*

children will find them difficult to read. This will not be so if they are introduced at the right time. They can serve two special purposes—

1. to assist workers in their special interests and constructions, and
2. to extend and made everyday experiences more interesting.

Book Making and Illustrating

Children should be encouraged to collect pictures, mount them, write short statements beneath each one and finally place the pages together and form them into a book which can be taken home.

a short period, before being taken home by the owner. This plan increases the interest of the whole group and inspires it to further effort.

Both cut-out, printed pictures and personal drawings should be permitted as illustrations in one and the same book.

Changes in Content of Library It is important to withdraw books from time to time as well as to add new ones. This method prevents over-familiarity and boredom amongst the users of the library. There is much more interest in what is being done, or is to be done. Books which were the centre of an absorbing interest a short time ago, even though excellent, give way to the latest interests.

ball

Brian



Brian has a ball.

He will kick it.

FIG. 13 (a)

Double Page of Book in which a 6-year-old Child Pasted Pictures, personally chosen, and Dictated Statements to Teacher who Wrote the Words beneath each Picture



This is Jean.

She has her doll.

FIG 13 (*b*)

Organization for the Self-chosen Work of Children of Six to Seven Years of Age

In general, it is best to arrange material for the use of children of five to six years of age within their own classroom. Material that is used more conveniently outside the room should be placed near the classroom. A sense of security while at work is fostered by awareness of the nearness of the familiar classroom and the presence of the mistress. All material should be available only to members of the particular class of five-year-old children.

Such an arrangement is not necessary for children of six to seven years of age. They are usually more emotionally stable than their younger brothers and sisters and not so dependent on the reassuring presence of a familiar class mistress.

Probably the best plan would be to see that material for quiet, sedentary occupations is available in the classroom.

Cookery, woodwork and painting might be taken in the school hall, or out of doors in the playground on fine days. Brick-building needs space, and this may be had either in the Hall or in a classroom set aside for this purpose.

Shops and the Post Office are likely to be used by all members of the school, and should remain in a fixed position from day to day. This may be either in the school hall, at the end of a wide corridor or in some other convenient position, not required for other purposes. School buildings differ so widely that individual arrangements are necessary for each.

Storing Material. A permanent storing-place is essential for each type of material. From this, it will be taken day by day as required, and replaced in good order when not in use.

It is important that material for the use of five-year-old children shall be placed where it can be quickly seen by all members of the group.

Plastic material, bricks, paints, etc., need to be attractively arranged, in full view, before work begins and not left hidden in a bag or cupboard until asked for. Older children gladly take turns in preparing a room, and come early in order to help. Individuals should clear away

their own material after use. Children who have put their materials away before the others usually enjoy helping with the final storing and general tidying up of the room.

Discussion Time. When unused material has been satisfactorily stored at the end of a work period, it is usual for everyone to take their mid-morning milk, sitting quietly at a table. This excellent arrangement provides a period of rest in which spent energy is restored and a break which precedes the undertaking of work of a different type.

When the playground period is over, the six-to seven-year-old children are ready to chat about their work. When the children are gathered together and all comfortably seated, the teacher will lead the discussion. Individuals show work completed and in progress. Questions are asked and answered. Frequently, the maker of a toy may ask advice and receive suggestions. The teacher's aim throughout this period must be to foster interest and encourage fluency of speech. Individual work should never be praised nor poorer results ignored. A natural discussion should lead to encouragement and the giving of helpful suggestions. Thus only can real progress be made by all members of a group. Above all it is essential for everyone to receive encouragement for further effort.

Morning Prayers

In many schools, prayers and religious instruction take place at the beginning of the morning session. Many children coming to school have been hurried along, and are still mentally absorbed in the out-of-school world and, indeed, are not ready to adjust themselves rapidly to the different conditions of school.

If individuals, on arrival, and after removing outdoor garments in the cloakroom, are permitted to go directly to their classroom and begin work on some self-chosen project, they gradually settle into the atmosphere of the environment.

Later in the morning, they are likely to be more ready to join in prayer, praise and thanksgiving, because immediately behind them they have lived through a satisfying and creative period.

The best time for religious instruction and corporate prayer is probably during the last half hour of the morning. The influence of this experience is then likely to accompany each child from school to home and last more effectively throughout the day.

The afternoon session would include the three R's, spoken English, music, P.E., etc., varying

The Time Table

Every school has its own special problems and must plan the daily Time Table in accordance with its needs and resources. The following arrangement allows for a variety of adaptations.

9-10 15 Arrival and individual choice of work.



FIG. 14

Children aged 6½ years writing stories

from day to day according to the age of the children and individual needs.

Whenever a child chooses work related to the three R's during the period of Individual Choice, help should be permitted and given by the teacher when sought. This is likely to occur as children approach seven years of age.

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 10.15-10.30 | Milk and Morning Break. |
| 10.30-10.45 | Discussion. |
| 10.45-11 | Recording and illustrating of news. |
| 11-11.25 | Music or P.E. or three R's. |
| 11.25-11.55 | Religious Instruction and Assembly. |

EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION

TIMES have changed. Nowhere is that statement more true than in the field of Education. No longer do thinking and forward-looking teachers regard primary education as mere schooling, a sort of packing-in process whereby wads of information have to be stuffed by hook or by crook into the minds of little children.

In the past, the classroom was a silent place, built and equipped for listening; the teacher was the only active person in the room and the "three R's" the most important subjects of the curriculum.

To-day, Infants' Schools that are working on what is known as an Activities Plan, have as their starting point the needs and interests of the children. The children's own experiences and observation of facts and events, their close contact with materials, natural surroundings and with people near at hand, are the means by which these needs are satisfied. It is the active community life within a school that yields material for living and learning.

A good school has the atmosphere of a good home and the teacher is not merely an instructor, but mother, father, playmate, friend and counsellor, fully aware of the individual needs of her children and ready and able to satisfy those needs. She sets the stage, making the inside of the classroom a stimulating yet secure place where things happen, lively exciting things. She knows when to help and advise, when to stand by, when to feed with information, demonstration, picture, story, song or rhyme, and when to turn a deaf ear.

But it is not only within the classroom that the teacher's work lies. She goes with her children into the playground, the field, the street, the factory and shop, opening their eyes to things not previously noticed, talking of things in the presence of those things, and encouraging an active interest in the real world.

Education thus becomes a natural and continuing process, stimulating the divine curiosity and dynamic creative energy inherent

in all children, so that they reach out to new people, explore new interests. It encourages and aids children to grow and mature into adults eager to know more of the world in which they live and ready to co-operate with their fellows, in order to build on the achievements of the past.

Activity schools vary in their procedure and in the programme which they adopt. Some retain a firm frame-work of subject matter, called "formal work in the three R's," presented in logical steps by the teacher, side by side with the pursuit of interests which arise naturally at other times of the day through the spontaneous activities of the children. Other schools have not this core of formal work.

It is the amount of stress put upon this core of formality that constitutes the main difference between these schools.

The main point of *agreement* between them lies in the belief that the children's *own* activity is the growing point of their full development, and all such schools utilize children's natural play forms as a means of learning. They therefore include in their daily programme what is generally known as a Free Activity Period or Choosing Time. In this period, which ranges from 1 to 1½ hours in length, the children choose from certain prescribed materials, games or equipment, and move about freely in the classroom, talking, playing, making and doing in a purposeful way, or pursue in playground, garden or school hall an interest that has arisen through their play or through a discussion. The latter is a time for news, talk of visits to places of interest, or of interesting events at home, school or in the street.

Ideas are stimulated through this Activity. With the companionship of other children and the help and experience of the teachers or of other adults in and about the school and neighbourhood much is learned. Materials have to be shared, and practical problems arise and have to be solved in these real-life situations. These give scope for the exercise of those creative and

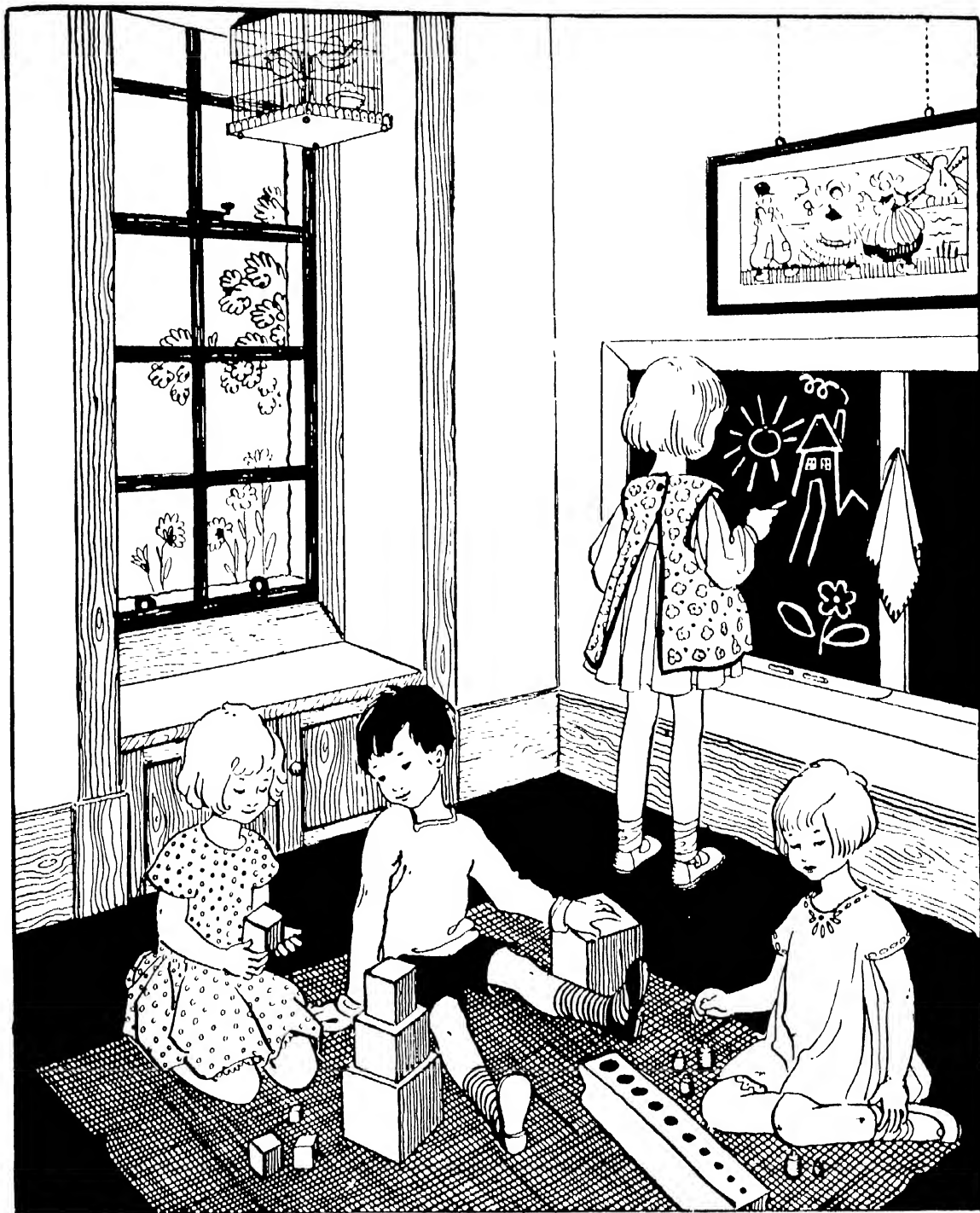


FIG. 1

Wall Blackboard with Ledge for Chalks and Duster. The Window gives Light on the Left Side of the Child

manipulative skills so necessary for all-round growth and development.

At other times of the day too there is an active social participation in the practical life of the school, e.g. counting dinner money, collecting materials for certain enterprises, replacing materials properly, tidying the classroom, dusting shelves, answering the telephone, helping with the lost property basket and with smaller children's names on outdoor clothes, watching clay, sharpening pencils and myriads of other "jobs" in which children love to co-operate, provided the teacher does not take their help for granted, nor ignore efforts at reliability, of remembering, of efficiency.

The time spent on discussion of school chores, and on the allocation of jobs, is well spent. The children enjoy being chosen for jobs and pursue them until the end of the week without having to be reminded of their tasks by anyone, and without them being made a burden.

It requires considerable skill on the part of the teacher to see that each child is given increasing responsibility as he grows older, and that discipline grows from these positive opportunities of living in a community rather than from her personality or merely from her negative injunctions.

Habits of Working Collectively and Joyfully

Learning to share.

Not interfering in or spoiling the play of others.

Knowing where things are kept.

Clearing up and replacing things as they found them.

Not pushing in and getting materials out of turn.

Saying please and thank you when asking for or receiving anything.

Being quiet outside other rooms.

Not disturbing teacher, by noise and clatter when she is teaching others.

Not interrupting others in group talks.

Waiting turn to talk in a group.

Helping others to do jobs.

Remembering promises to help another, or to bring something to help play forward.

From the way in which children play with and use materials, a good teacher will know each of her children's strengths (leadership, inventiveness, co-operation) and their weaknesses, (sulkeness, lack of persistence, etc.) and know intimately their attitudes to each other, to adults and to their surroundings.



FIG. 2

Co-operative work in arranging Flowers for the Schoolroom

In most schools, if not in all, there is a willingness to delay the formal teaching of the three R's until the children are of a mental age to benefit, or to feel the need to read, write and use numbers. Before such formal teaching takes place, the beginnings of the tool subjects are introduced through happenings of the moment, or situations in the life of the school or classroom, or in the child's need and purpose in play, and the point of them and the value of learning to read and to count is seen by the children in its proper setting.

There are many classrooms where the teacher endeavours to make her children feel confident

and happy by giving them freedom to move, to talk, to make and to play, but where the work goes by no special name.

There are other teachers who feel the limitations of traditional methods, yet hesitate to adopt the newer practices. They fear that once the children get out of their desks and move about the room, things will happen so rapidly that discipline and order will be sacrificed and that they will not be able to restore them.

Others have the notion that "learn by doing" means that children are let loose upon the materials provided and that little or no guidance or suggestion is given by the teacher, with the result that the children go the wind's way for the whole of the time making no real progress and eventually feeling frustrated.

Many other teachers, while believing in this method of learning through experience, shrink from taking the first step because of shortage of material, lack of space or storage facilities, unsuitable building or the absence of a rich environment.

Yet some small beginnings can be made here and now, whatever the limitations, to bring the classroom practice into line with the findings of more recent educational research.

After all, the main requisite for a successful teacher of young children is a good relationship between her children and herself. A soft voice, an ever ready repertoire of stories, rhymes, finger plays, traditional games and songs, a wide lively interest in everyday facts and happenings in the world around her, and a strong desire to help children to master the skills and crafts necessary for social living, help in the formation of such a relationship.

Let us assume that a teacher accepts the principle of learning through experience and play, and that she has decided to make a change in her classroom organization and practice.

What can be done as a beginning?

Introduce one free period a day (or week) at first, of 1 to 1½ hours morning or afternoon, in which the children are free to choose what they would like to do from materials provided. But before the suggestion is put to the children, the teacher must have some idea of what their

response is likely to be so that she is prepared adequately to deal with some of their suggestions.

She must also make up her mind which, of all the things the children suggest, she can allow to be done in this 1½ hours *inside* the classroom, which of the things she must for a time keep in their usual setting (for example, chasing games, football, left for the P.E. period), and which of the things must be deferred until materials can be procured, e.g. cooking, woodwork, or until the children have got used to moving about the room in groups or individually.

What things will the children suggest? What do they like doing?

Running races.
Chasing—climbing—jumping.
Dressing up—acting.
Going on visits to Zoo—docks—seaside—
local stores
Imagine they are grown up
Playing Mothers and Fathers.
Playing Pirates and Robbers.
Playing Shops.
Having a party.
Cooking—making toffee—cakes.
Collecting things.
Looking at pictures.
Listening to stories—reading.
Watching men work.
Playing weddings and funerals—burying
dead birds, etc.
Seeing new things.
Making things work.
Taking things to pieces.
Sewing.
Sawing wood.
Building with wood and with bricks.
Painting—playing with "Dinky"¹ toys.

Even before the materials are forthcoming, or before the free period is introduced, there are things which can be done to get the children used to an informal setting and to give the teacher during the transition period the feeling that she will be in control of the situation, and that she has some sort of guarantee against confusion.

¹ Miniature cars, boats, etc.



FIG. 3

Children at Work. Notice the low table and plain rug on the floor. The play cupboard has a useful shelf for books

“*Setting the Stage*”

1. Arrange the classroom in a less formal manner by moving the children's desks or tables into blocks or groups. Leave a clear space somewhere in the room where the children can gather round the teacher for discussion or for story-telling, or to hear one another's news items, or to look at new things introduced by the teacher or brought into the class by the children.

This is almost sure to break up the formal atmosphere of a room, bringing teacher and children into closer relationship, like that of children at a mother's knee. A recognized “listening corner” where the teacher on a low chair and with soft voice, can by her very attitude, by a look or gesture, set things in motion or “round off” the more noisy active periods of the day, is an essential feature of the activity classroom.

An attractive grouping of furniture, flowers on a child's table, a painted orange-box-book-shelf, with specially attractive story picture books and magazines invitingly displayed, can help to emphasize this atmosphere of friendliness and informality.

Sometimes half the class can bring their chairs to sit on, with the rest sitting on the floor at their feet, the whole group arranged in a semi-circle in front of the teacher, so that easy movement of any one of them is possible without disturbing the others. One or two felt or rubber mats can be brought to the “circle” to add to the ceremony of the occasion.

It would be wise to discuss these plans with the children beforehand, to get volunteers to help in moving the furniture and then to take their suggestions and criticisms of the arrangements after a period of sitting that way.

2. Get rid of the teacher's large table or desk, if there is one, as it is out of place in a room of this nature.

Some teachers have shortened the legs of their tables and used them as a central nature table, or have put them in a corner of the room to be used in a quiet cutting, pasting and making corner. Others have ingeniously made a corner platform by pushing the table right against the wall. A brightly painted orange-box book case can be placed on top, nicely arranged with scrap

books, picture books, children's encyclopaedias or geographical magazines. Two or three hassocks, mats or children's chairs may be added, with a small pair of shop assistant's steps on which to mount to this upper “floor.” A clothes-horse screen, or even a tall cupboard placed with its back against the table, can make a quiet corner or book corner, or even a place where the children will love to play houses during the “choosing time” or free play period.

3. Plan something for the children to do on their arrival in the mornings and afternoons, whether the teacher is herself in the room or not.

As a beginning one of the following materials common to every school may safely be chosen for the whole class

Blackboards and chalks and rubbers.

“Plasticine.”

Scissors and newspaper or the usual coloured squares.

Bead threading.

Picture books—or even comics to begin with.

An attitude of joyful expectancy is to be encouraged at this time. The “job” must not be a mere device for keeping children quiet while the teacher calls the register or collects dinner money, or talks with visiting parents.

If the children have been allowed to lose interest in these familiar materials by too frequent unsupervised use of them, or by the absence of praise or criticism of their efforts, the teacher will find it necessary to recapture their interest by various means, e.g. —

(i) New “Plasticine,” with more insistence on method of putting it away, e.g. flat pancakes with thumb-marks, or in very round balls.

(ii) New tin for storage, newly painted or artistically labelled.

(iii) New “home” for blackboards or new chalks or rubbers.

(iv) Dictate something interesting for children to make—the longest snake, rings for 4 fingers, and give them a time limit for finishing, calling them to “listening corner” to show, or selecting one or two for exhibition when all are gathered together.

(v) Additional box of skewers, coloured spills, pebbles, match sticks, for use with “Plasticine.”

(vi) Bead threading to specific pattern drawn by teacher on the blackboard, 6 reds, 2 blacks, 5 yellows, etc.

(vii) Send one or two unusual efforts to another class to show.

There are many other devices to keep the children alert. By talking to the children individually as she goes amongst them, or by discussion of their efforts with the group afterwards, the teacher can encourage further adventure and increase their original ideas.

Some devices for keeping children alert and for helping them to improve their "listening" and powers of observation are -

(i) *Tell* them what to do the night before. "Who will remember?"

(ii) Ask them to look for something on the way home and to make a picture containing that thing, so that teacher can guess what they have chosen.

(iii) As a surprise draw a large coloured picture on the blackboard of material they are to use.

(iv) Make posters for every main "before school" material and put one up sometimes.

(v) Write the *name* of the material on the blackboard showing them two or three names the night before. Later use flash cards, e.g. "Plasticine," Boards, Beads, Books.

Later (vi) Write directions according to capacity of children, in addition to flash card displayed

Vary procedure by letting a child choose, or draw, or write the notice.

The teacher should concentrate on encouraging good habits, as for example—

Getting materials from the shelves quickly.

Remembering and listening to instructions.

Moving about freely.

Putting materials back quietly, quickly and neatly *as a class*.

Winding round beads and beadlaces and tucking in ends.

Cleaning blackboards properly both sides.

Rolling and smoothing "Plasticine" well.

Stacking boards well.

Putting picture books with opening to back of shelf.

If the teacher takes notice of how each child responds there will be little difficulty later on when more materials are introduced which are not so simple to replace on shelves. Large open-topped boxes or tins for storage of these basic materials are advisable, so that they can be easily accessible at odd times, when the whole class needs them at the same time, or in an emergency when teacher is called away in the middle of a "listening" period.

This organization of certain basic materials so that they are easily accessible without help from the teacher, increases the children's capacity to use idle moments and become purposefully busy and independent of *constant* supervision.

4. Ask the children to bring wooden boxes for shelving, e.g. apple boxes, grocer's or orange boxes, if present shelving is insufficient or unsuitable for children's use, e.g. too high or too congested. Tall cupboards can be cut down. The help of fathers or a friendly caretaker can usually be had when alteration of furniture, or re-arrangement of the room is necessary.

5. Visit other classes with the children as frequently as possible, when there is something to show, or something to see.

This will also be the means by which they will gain experience of moving about in large groups with safety and with consideration for other classes. Following these visits expeditions farther afield can be more easily undertaken at a later date.

The stage being set thus, the Free Activity

draw a



make a



look at a



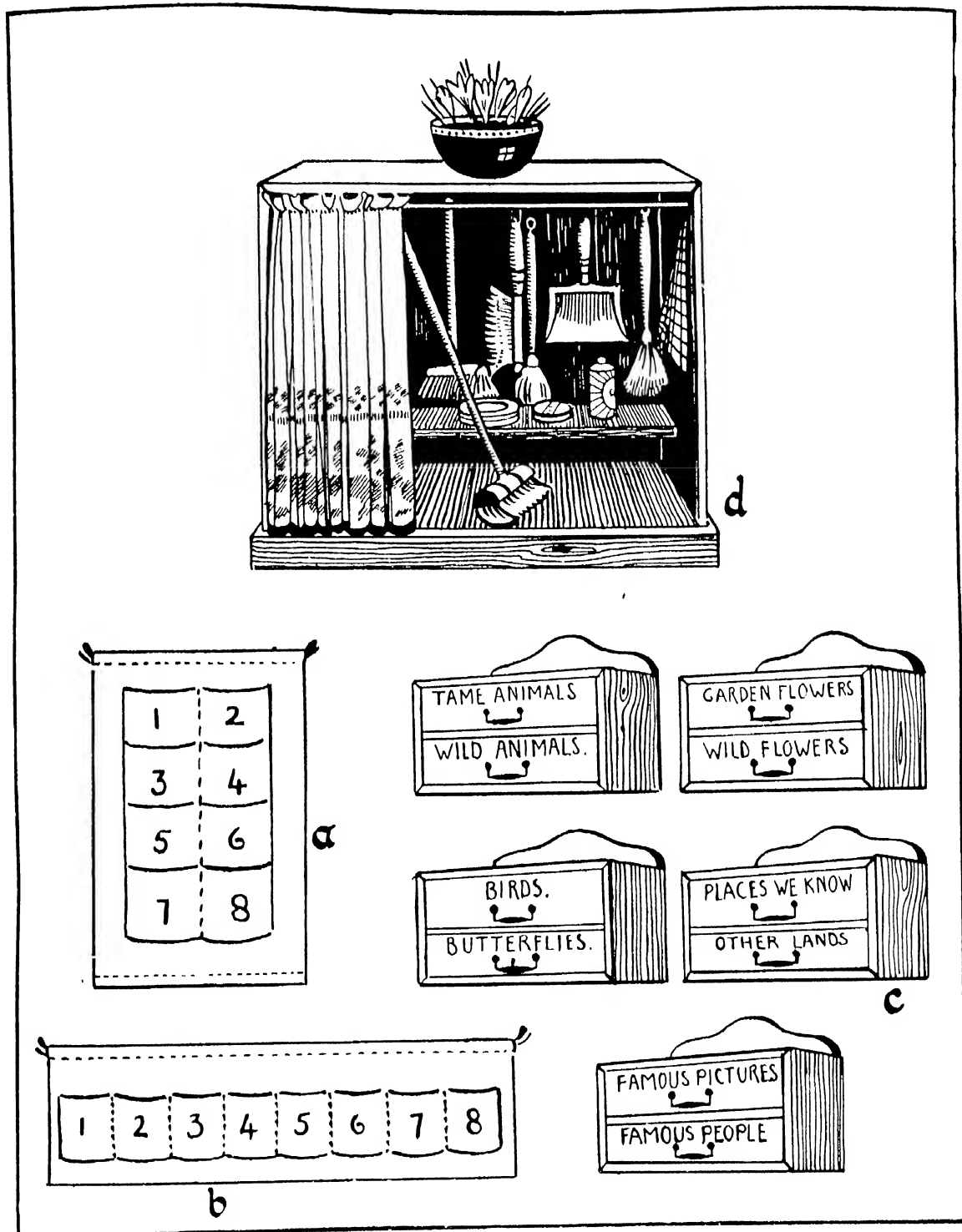


FIG. 4

(a and b) Wall Pockets made to Fit the Wall Space (c) Cabinets for Picture Post Cards. (d) The Cleaning Cupboard

or Choosing Time could be attempted with more confidence.

As an intermediate step, should the teacher feel it to be necessary, group handwork lessons in which the teacher offers a choice of only two activities, could be planned.

It is important that the choice should be between two equally attractive activities.

replacing things correctly, or careful use of more fragile articles, e.g. doll's tea-set, or of scarce materials, e.g. rubber bands, or revise the whole clearing-away process for new children or children returned from illness. The number of children choosing one thing can also be controlled; at first by the teacher saying, "Who would like to play with the fishing game?"—the



FIG. 5

Teach them Early to Keep their Things Clean

It is advisable that the material selected by the teacher shall, for this first attempt, be of the kind more easily organized and controlled, e.g. paper-cutting is more easily handled than clay or paint.

Whether the Free Activity is introduced to the class as a group handwork lesson, or whether more choice is given from the very beginning, it has been found to be a good plan to have the children gathered round the teacher in an informal group, and to start off always with a short discussion.

The children are then quite clear as to what materials are available for that day. The teacher can introduce new materials or new games gradually, give reminders of rules of

Dinky toys—the new tea-set in the Wendy house, etc., and the children leave the main listening group when they have been chosen by her.

The gradual introduction of new sitting games, e.g. dominoes, snap, picture or number lotto, construction toys like Tinkertoy, Matador, Meccano for older children, or even a large box of cotton reels and fine dowel rod will be found popular with some children.

The house corner may become popular by showing the class a new doll's tea-set, or by giving a demonstration to the whole class of bathing the new plastic or rubber doll.

In this way, the number of groups will be steadily increased throughout the first year, and may be classified as follows—

- (i) Water
- (ii) Sand
- (iii) Clay
- (iv) Painting
- (v) Teacher's Large B.B.
- (vi) Wendy House
- (vii) Making box
- (viii) Dressing-up box
- (ix) Woodwork
- (x) Building with big bricks, planks, boxes, countersteps, etc., canvas

Clearing Away

At first it may be advisable to keep the actual period of play shorter than is ultimately desirable, in order to leave time for the clearing up to be done well. Initially rules and guidance will be necessary as, for example –

- Pencils in tin—point upwards.
- Paste brushes bristles upwards.
- Pieces off floor.
- Cupboard doors shut.
- Crayon swept from floor or desk
- Paint wiped from board and floor.
- Sand swept from floor, also wood chips.

The household equipment and where it is to be kept will have been considered—the long broom, the dustpan and brush, the house flannel, and dishcloth, bowl, enamel jugs—large and small—and pail.

When the teacher says, “Listen a moment, children,” waiting for noise and busyness to subside, the packing up can begin. It is much better for the children if a preliminary warning is given to the various groups before this, that time is nearly up. Later on, a notice “Clearing Away” or “Clear up” can be displayed in an agreed conspicuous place, or taken round by a child to the various groups.

The children will soon discover that the more quickly and ably they clear away, the more time they will have for their play. A good way to improve the speed and quality of their packing up is for the teacher to go and sit in the quiet listening corner, ready with a story, picture book, or with a new game to show them.

While singing, or telling the story, or showing and discussing the pictures, she will be aware of

the children who are still engaged in clearing away, perhaps encouraging more haste or less noise by a word now and again.

She may comment on good clearing, speed, quiet moving or efficiency of a child or group. She may need to draw attention to the unwiped table in the Home Corner, broom left on its head, or cupboard gaping open. She may have to send a child for the puzzles or the ludo because a piece has been found on the floor, go through them, counting pieces with the class, perhaps, but all the time keeping the interest and co-operation of the children alive.

Another way to organize good clearing up so that the time taken over it gradually decreases, is for the teacher to

(i) Warn each group in turn that time is nearly up.

(ii) Then go to the group that needs the longest time, e.g. bricks to be stacked, and get that group to begin first, leaving the children who have the least clearing to do, a bit longer to play.

(iii) Tell each group to go with, say, picture books or beads or blackboards, when they have cleared their things away, and sit in a group on the floor by the teacher's chair. This will leave the teacher free to help individual groups with their clearing up, and to remind them of points they have missed the day before.

(iv) Go to “listening” corner where the children have been sitting with their beads, etc., and see what they have been doing, and make comments, showing definite interest in their efforts.

(v) Suggest quick clearing away of materials, which children should at this stage be used to handling if previous training has been successful.

(vi) Then tell a story or hold a discussion about their “choosing” time, according to the age and needs of the group.

(With five-year-olds, for example, scarcely any discussion as such is valuable.)

Discussion of Free Activity

Many teachers know that much of the success of good free play periods depends very largely on skilled handling of the talk and suggestions

of the children when they are about to choose what they will do, or after the clearing away has been finished.

When all are gathered in the "listening" corner, the teacher's comments and criticisms or descriptions of a good idea she has seen in the play, the showing of a specially interesting piece of cutting, drawing or modelling (wood or clay or making-box productions), will encourage remarks from the group, spread new ideas, encourage suggestions from the children and produce the kind of discussion that drives the play on to higher levels next day.

The teacher may suggest an idea of her own, and see if the children approve of it. She may show a new piece of equipment, make a new rule in the light of some mishap to bricks, oil paint, etc., suggest a new place to keep things, always giving the children the opportunity to put forward their own suggestions, make remarks or to have a good idea, before she expresses hers. "I've got a good idea," is a remark so often heard in the school where a purposeful activity period is carried on, and where the short vital discussion times are skilfully handled by the teacher.

Where to get material for improvement of play will also be discussed at these times.

How to start collecting material, teacher making a notice in front of the class, asking for material from other classes, mothers who call, or from the junior school, etc., will sometimes provide a talking point.

Showing a picture, reading a story, singing a song, to illustrate or stimulate an interest already beginning to develop from the play, are good ways of making this discussion period successful.

The following books are especially suited for teacher and class to look at together during "gathering round times" or while children finish clearing away—

Number Rhymes and Finger Plays, E. R. Boyce and Kathleen Bartlett, Pitman

Finger Play for Nursery Schools, H. Rostron, Pitman.

Rhyming Plays for Infants and Juniors, M. G. Barnes, Pitman. (A series of nine small books for pupils.)

Nursery Rhymes, Muriel Dawson, Raphael, Tuck.

Nursery Rhymes and Stories, Jenney Dean, Pitman.

Puffin Book of Rigmoroles.

Tall Book of Mother Goose.

Tall Book of Nursery Tales, Harper and Harper.

Fifty Speech Games, H. Yaffey, Pitman.

Strewel Peter, Blackie.

Story Games, Kathleen Bartlett, Pitman.

Mother Goose Rhymes, Harrap.

Round the Cherry Tree, (original verses for group reciting and for action games) Kathleen Bartlett, Pitman.

Pan: Verse and Verse Appreciation for three- to seven-year-olds, Kathleen Bartlett, Pitman.

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>What goes with What?</i> | } Play books, Collins. |
| <i>What Makes What?</i> | |
| <i>Turn over Tales</i> | |
| <i>Number Book</i> | |

Name and Number in Nursery Rhyme, H. Rostron, Pitman.

We Play And Grow Series, Maisie Cobby, Pitman.

Jingles for Me to Play. I am Five.

Rhymes for Me to Speak: I am Five.

Jingles for Me to Play: I am Six.

Rhymes for Me to Speak I am Six.

Jingles for Me to Play I am Seven.

Rhymes for Me to Speak. I am Seven.

Teacher's Book.

The Gay A.B.C., Francois, Scribner.

I Spy Alphabet, Francois, John Lane-Bodley Head.

Big Fish and Little Fish, Paul Unger, Routledge.

The Book of a Thousand Poems, collected by Murray McBain, Evans.

Physical Activity for Young Children, Marjorie Harrison, Pitman.

Sets of Pictures

Nursery Rhymes, Field Pictures, Ginn & Co.

Projects and Pictures, Macmillan.

Nursery Rhymes, Series I-III, Warne.

Home and Farm Animals, Warne.

Class Pictures, Macmillan.

Two American Books very valuable for story materials for stimulating activities and leading the children on to higher levels are—

Reading with Children, Annie Eaton.

Literature Old and New for Children, Annie Moore, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.

Some essential points for the teacher to note and which are helpful to success as work develops are—

- (i) Keep voice low-pitched and quiet.
- (ii) Make the "gathering-in" times and news times really interesting by giving good stories, new books, new finger plays, or rhymes or something to show new technique of making or cutting.
- (iii) Do not call across the class to one child while the others are working, as this encourages "a deaf ear" in the others.
- (iv) Insist on quiet before beginning to give instructions or asking a question, and do not allow even one child to move until you have finished speaking.
- (v) When in action in front of the group for the look and listen times, do not keep the class waiting while you reprimand or attend to one child's needs.
- (vi) Do not allow a child to interrupt you while you are looking at and speaking to another child or group, nor allow the children to interrupt each other's talk.

Materials

A good proportion of the consumable material for use in the Play Period in Infants' Schools is provided by the children.

Apart from the fact that children really enjoy collecting for its own sake, the teacher who gives them opportunities for co-operation with her in getting the necessary materials such as scrap wood, cartons, medicine bottles, fancy papers, wooden boxes, odd wools, silks, will find that much of the subject matter of discussions naturally arises from problems of storage, labelling, notices, which the children have to solve. In the early stages, young teachers who are unused to a large group, can get experience of when to let a child speak, and discover ways of refusing to let one child interrupt another, or to let one talkative child hold the floor for too long. She will use suggestions skilfully, reject

unsuitable ideas sympathetically, or use them for the class or group to consider and give reasons for unsuitability. Throughout, the aim should be to keep the discussion moving with each child alert and willing to contribute suggestions.

As has been said before, the organization and care of materials is important. There will be a gradual introduction of new materials as and when the teacher or the children see the need for them, and an increasing measure of responsibility is given to the children for the proper care and replacement of them. Suitable strong boxes and tins are selected for the specific equipment and equally suitable places chosen for them, so that they are properly arranged and made easily accessible.

Note. The teacher should retain a shelf for her own special books, and for material which children are not allowed to use without special permission.

Jobs for Children. These should be very gradually introduced. Children should see that—

- Sand is damped.
- Clay is of the right consistency.
- Tins of nails are replenished.
- Dressing-up clothes are kept clean.
- Paste-pots are washed and old ones replaced where necessary.
- Pencils sharpened.
- Making-box cleared out.

Lead the children gradually on to being aware of the foregoing tasks. The "Jobs List" could be made longer as the children progress to the top of the Infants' School. But to expect too much of children, or to set too high a standard for them is a mistake. This is especially so in the early stages.

Every school should endeavour to have a Central Store and in it the following items—

- 2 pairs scales and weights
- 1 cardboard cutter
- 3 large ball frames (not on stand)
- Surveyor's tape
- Leather punch
- Printing set—1 each of Alphabet, capital letters, small letters, figures, and signs, . , , , , ,
- Lettering pens (ball point or square)
- Glue pot (scotch glue)
- Gallon can for turps
- Oil can, for trolleys and nursery toys, etc

Pencil sharpener (Crown).
Magnifying glass
Compass

A collection of the following waste materials is useful—

Cotton reels.
Match boxes.
Shells.
Conkers
Acorns.
Buttons.
Corks.
Tin lids.
Match sticks.
1-lb. Jam jars.
2-lb. Jam jars
Medicine bottles, graded sizes.
Marmite and Bovril bottles.
Tough wrapping paper from requisition parcels
Sets of tins { round toffee tins,
 { cocoa and tobacco tins,
 { oxo tins.
Cheese boxes.
Odd tins (no sharp edges)
Skewers (metal and wooden)
Corrugated cardboard (best stored in rolls)
Rag bag.
Odds and ends of wools, silks, etc
Old newspapers
Odd string box
Small wooden boxes (Kraft cheese, etc.).

Most of these can be stored best in wire waste paper baskets or in sugar, orange, tea or apple boxes to be had from local stores for a few pence.

Also worth setting up is a central store of—

Clothes horses, 3 or 4.
Strawboards (old card posters will do).
4 dozen bulldog clips
Set of oil paint brushes, 1 in. to 1½ in.
3 or 4 distemper brushes, 2 in. to 2½ in.
Painting-easels or plywood 20 in. × 30 in. with bulldog clips
Paint brushes, large, medium and small, 4 dozen
Set of tools—

Hammering pliers
Chisels
Pincers
Brace and bits
Gimlet.
Bradawl.
Screwdriver.
Fret-saw
Saws

The following stock of consumable materials should be available—

Sugar paper
Kitchen paper
Tissue paper (white and coloured).
Coloured squares (gummed and ungummed 4 in. and 6 in. squares glazed and unglazed)
White chalk, Teacher's B B

Coloured chalk, Teacher's B.B.
Turps 1 pint.
Indian ink, 1 pint.
White ink, 1 pint.
Clear varnish, 1 pint.
Reeves Pastels.
Teachers' Stock Boxes.
Wax crayons (Fine Art).
Large pencils (Black Prince).
Finer pencils.
Cardboard—
 Large sheets, 20 in. × 30 in.
 Small sheets, bright coloured.
Tracing books.
Tracing paper.
Charcoal
Tempera (Powder paint).
Paste powder.
Gum, 1 pint
Strawboard
Black cardboard, thick and durable.
Plam exercise books
Wide-lined exercise books.

For Making Individual Apparatus

Pictures, for indicators, reading apparatus; Philip and Tacey's catalogue, Arnold's AL. books
Tape measures
Beads, all sizes and shapes.
Laces, coloured.
Bead-bais, 1 to "Welbent," Arnold.
Ball frames, varied, strong
Alphabet indicator (but mostly teachers make their own in order to have variety)
Snakes and Ladders
Ludo.
Quoits.
Happy Families
Race Games
Money
Counters, round and square, bone and card.
Figures, wooden, card, large and small, black and coloured
Letters, capital and small, coloured card and black, all sizes
Flash-cards, various, "Welbent," for numbers
Flash-cards, for reading tests
Dominoes.
Lotto.
Dice and Marbles for Games
Library of Pictures and Books from which classes borrow.

Each teacher should endeavour to have—

Waste paper basket.
Thermometer
Large pair of scissors
1 Ruler.
1 Tape measure.
1 Set of paste jars.
1 Scrubbing brush.
1 Pail, bowl, enamel jug
1 Long broom, 1 dustpan and brush
1 Dishcloth and floor cloth
Long Jack (100-bead bar, beads threaded in 10's on string)
Number indicator.

Shelf for own books.
 Large blackboard
 Set of "Plasticine" boards
 Set of children's scissors and pencils.
 Making Box (Waste materials for immediate use
 —wire, boxes, corks, etc.)
 Long rope.
 Football.
 Dressing-up box
 Tool box, and tools for children.
 Wood box.
 Sand tray, zinc-lined.
 Doll, and doll's equipment.
 Tea-set
 Clothes horse for House Corner or for Book
 Corner.
 Picture books (orange-box book shelf)
 Set of children's blackboards and blackboard
 rubbers.
 Tin of "Plasticine" enough for piece each for her
 children
 Set of children's paste jars (8 enough)
 1 case needle and cotton and wool and bag
 Pencil sharpener

Use of Space

Teachers must use their imagination and endeavour to break away from the traditional use of their rooms and of the school building as a whole.

Members of the staff should no longer remain with their children as isolated units, but co-operate with each other to make the fullest possible use of every corner of the school building, sharing or taking it in turns to use corridors, corners, and washplaces, that are free for any part of the day.

The Making Box

This will contain waste materials from home, school, and stores.

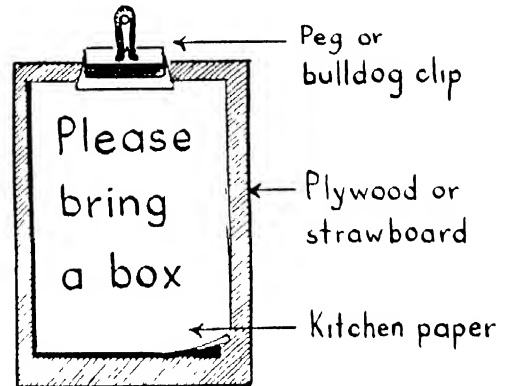
Ice-cream cartons
 Shredded Wheat and Quaker Oat boxes
 Vim tins, toilet paper rolls
 Cotton reels, match boxes
 Fruit and cress baskets
 Rubber bands from pickle lids
 Postcards and backs of writing pads.
 Paper bags
 Tin foil and toffee papers
 Match sticks
 Wrapping papers
 Odd pieces of wool and twine, wire, corks
 and materials listed elsewhere

These important constructive materials may be introduced for the first time, perhaps as the result of a child showing something in News Time which he made at home, or by the class

finding for example a picture of a matchbox train, a windmill, or a little cork horse, or a walnut boat.

Discussion may lead to—

- (i) Suggestion that children bring materials.
- (ii) Making a poster in front of them, to put by the entrance for mothers to see, or to take to Assembly or around to each class.



Pictorial notices are best. Let the children make suggestions as the teacher paints or draws.

(iii) Visiting store-room to look for suitable wooden box.

Visiting grocer's with class to ask for one.

Asking children to try and bring one from home or store.

Asking for volunteer to sand-paper a box in Choosing Time, or selecting a child to paint it with oil paint.

Demonstration of Use of Oil Paint by Teacher if used for First Time

Rules.

1. Spread thick wrapping paper on floor.
2. Put on overall, roll up sleeves
3. Put paint brush in water immediately after use, and later clean with turps, if this cannot be done at the time.

The constant discussing of what materials will be needed and the interest shown in their selection, once a suggestion for doing, making, or playing, has arisen, evidences the importance of good organization of the equipment and material in a classroom. Questions such as the following will be asked.

- (i) What do we need?
- (ii) Where can we get it?—When shall we go?
- (iii) Who will ask at home—at a shop?

When in response to the efforts made the material is obtained, the discussion takes a new turn—

- Where shall we keep it?
- How shall we store it?
- Do we need to paint it—label it?

The top shelf in the cupboard may be reserved by the teacher for storing extra pins—drawing, safety and ordinary, rubber bands, all sized paper fasteners, tags, adhesive linen and transparent tape, string box and box of odd string, rag bag, needles, punch, pencil sharpener, large scissors, and steel rule for use with cardboard cutters.

The release of these materials by the teacher calls for careful control and check.

It is best at first to have a set place or table where children can sit to work together. They talk and get ideas from each other and later co-operate in the making of models. In this way what is being done becomes a centre of general interest. The teacher encourages all to help in clearing up the table and floor, and directs the replacing of scissors, paste, her property, in their right places. Constant revision is necessary of where things “go” as what is available is not constant in nature or amount. *Discussion* is necessary on the spot, or with the class when gathered round afterwards, as to where to keep or exhibit their creations. Discussion also “on the spot” is effective if made while children are playing in their various groups, e.g. sawing a piece of wood, fixing a funnel. See also Section on *Number in the Infant School*.

Water, Sand and Clay Groups

Whether children are 4, 5, 6, or 7 years old, play with these materials is of undoubted educational value.

A zinc-lined tray approximately 20 in. × 36 in. is best for water play or for wet sand, but a zinc bath, or the shallowest size cattle feeding trough can be used quite successfully.

If space is limited, however, or desks fixed to the floor, the teacher's large blackboards can be

laid across the childrens' desks to support two or three old roasting tins from Dining Centres or from army surplus stores, and a group of children will play around these quite happily. These smaller trays are more easily emptied than the larger type of tray, and on occasion one can be used for a child's individual enterprise, as for example a garden design for the doll's house, or for a harbour or seaside model.

These small trays have been found to be most popular with the older children, and if a group of children with the making box happen to be near a child with a single tray, a centre of interest often emerges in the shape of a model docks, a town, or a park pond. The teacher may then arrange for the children who have thus merged to continue all together each day if they wish to, until the common interest has been brought to a satisfactory climax. A fitting conclusion may well be an exhibition or “show” to the other classes or to parents. In other cases the interest dies down, and there is a turn to something new.

Sometimes lack of space in a classroom makes it necessary to allow children to play around a large sand or water tray in a corridor or in the main hall. Several classes can then share in the use of the tray, if they arrange for their choosing time to take place at different times of the school day.

Close co-operation between the teachers and children of the classes who share is essential, and certain rules will have to be evolved for all concerned if this arrangement is to work satisfactorily.

Here are a few suggested rules—

- (i) Sand not to be played with at all times of the day by all who pass by.
- (ii) Each group to leave floor swept, sand smoothed and all sand tools unearthed and taken back to the class to which they belong.
- (iii) The cover (strawboard or plywood) made to fit onto the tray must be replaced carefully.
- (iv) Each class to have its own tin of sand or water toys and be responsible for taking them back to their room.

Dry Sand. Tools can be kept in a large painted tin or wooden box. “Dry Sand” should be painted carefully on the outside of the container

to distinguish it from the box in which "Wet Sand" tools are stored. The names of tools and containers used on different occasions are painted and shown in front of the whole group at a looking or listening time and special "homes" chosen for them. The following are examples of suitable water-play vessels—

- Bottles, medicine bottles, various sizes
- Spoons, varying sized and colours.
- Scoops, varying shapes and sizes
- Tins with lids
- Sieves
- Funnels.

The addition of a pair of dolls' scales or home-made balances often leads to shop-play, but it is best to have other things first and exhaust the possibilities of these to begin with.

Vim tins cut down to varying sizes and with edges strengthened with adhesive tape make an attractive set of dry sand measures if painted with enamel or with poster paint and varnished.

Shells, twigs, pebbles may be added later to increase ideas and to extend the children's play.

Wet Sand Tools

- Butter-pats
- Spoons wooden spoons
- Patty-tins
- Metal egg cups
- Little cake tins all shapes and sizes
- Rolling pin
- Ice cream cartons
- Shells, twigs, spills, pebbles, stones

Water-play Toys

- Spoons
- Bottles and funnels
- A length of rubber tubing
- Cocoa tins painted with lids perforated
- Floating rubber and wooden toys

In the summer when a group can be out of doors, bubble pipes can be introduced.

A withdrawal of the water and sand play for a time has proved to be beneficial when the children do not choose them readily or there is evidence of a waning interest in these materials. When re-introduced, fresh impetus is given to the play and new ideas arise, especially if a new tool is added which the children have not had before.

Proximity of groups often leads to the emergence of a new interest and the play shifts to higher levels than the mere experimenting with material for its own sake. For instance, in the house corner, where "father" goes shopping, he

strays to the sand tray and buys ice-cream or some cakes. "Mother" sets the table and gets some sugar, or a pie from the "people" at the sand tray. It is easy to see how the "Wendy House" becomes the scene of a party or a café, and the sand group decide to play shop.

A tactful teacher seizes such moments to help the play forward on the spot, or in the discussion time afterwards, or by guiding the children's choice of playmates the next day before Choosing Time, with a suggestion "Do the children who played with the 'shop' want to play again to-day?" "Who else would like to join in?" etc. etc. This is dependent on there being room without over-crowding.

A situation may arise when the sand or water could be emptied from the trays and replaced by clay, papier mâché, earth or sawdust. The children may now make a sweet or fruit shop, and streets, towns, fairs, zoo, come into being constructed sometimes with the co-operation of the group of children using the making box, or cutting pictures from coloured paper.

House Play

One of the most valuable things for social training is the play in a Wendy House or Home Play Corner. It does not matter how rough the equipment is, a simple clothes horse covered with plywood, strawboard, hessian, or curtaining, or even tough wrapping paper will do. The covering can be painted in a brick pattern and a simple window made with laths and a curtain frill.

The more elaborate kind of Wendy House may take up more room than is available in the classroom. If this is so it may be put in the Assembly Hall, where several classes can share in the use of it. The simple clothes horse type can be used for screens for a play, and on other occasions can be enlarged for café or hospital play. An advantage is that it can be stacked away when not in use.

In the absence of other and more suitable provision teachers may find that moving their cupboards out from the wall, and using the space behind as the play-house, adding a two-fold clothes horse as the door, will be accepted by the children as suitable.

The provision of a doll, a doll's bed, bath, tea-set and pram, give the children plenty of scope in playing out their hopes and fears, and in imitating the activities of adults in home situations. In general it will be found that—

A washable plastic doll is best.

A tea-set should be made of enamel or tin. Bakelite is too fragile.

A doll's bed need be only a greengrocer's fruit box.

The pram can be made from an odd wooden box.

Later additions are made as the children's play develops and may include —

An electric stove made out of an orange box cut down, with circular holes for the hot-plates.

A dressing-up box used inside the house. Using this box sometimes leads to the theatre play through the "mother and father" going out and leaving the baby with "auntie."

School plays often start from inside and outside the Home Corner.

If House Play occurs with older children, the decision to make their own table, chairs, etc., is likely to take precedence over the home interest for a while. Sometimes the two interests run simultaneously each by a group.

An electric iron, small doll's size, and ironing board, encourages further development of the house play. Small shopping baskets, money, an old purse, and real cooking—all contribute to a widening interest and to the bringing together of two or more groups.

Building with Big Bricks

The materials needed are odd planks, a pair of counter steps, eight or nine orange or grocer's boxes, (these should be sandpapered to guard against splinters). Boys delight in working in these materials and what they do often links up with that done by the children playing house, fire engines, buses, and trains. For example the drivers of the buses go into the house for cups of tea.

The house often becomes a hospital, and makes necessary the building of an ambulance. Hammers and nails are asked for and the boxes are transformed.

From sacking, odd pieces of canvas, broom sticks, pieces of strawboard from requisition cartons, the teacher can often give help in making firemen's hats, sailors' caps during a Free Activity period, or in the afternoon sessions.

Dressing-up Box

This popular play material can often be collected by the children and kept in a painted grocer's box.

As with the Tool Box, Wood Box, Making Box, the name "Dressing-up Box" should be painted on it clearly in bright enamel, with the whole group watching, and a special "home" for it chosen by the children and teacher together. A low shelf is preferable so that the children can take the box to the corner or room in which they are to play, and afterwards replace it in its chosen place without the help of the teacher.

At first, six or seven children may be chosen to play with this dressing-up material, but of course the number will depend largely on the number of garments and other things available—feathers, ribbons, Christmas streamers, a bell, belts, braids, old lace curtains, dresses, skirts and felt hats with other oddments from home are sufficient to start a wedding or party, or a procession.

The teachers must be on the look-out for children who have a plan and wish to organize a group with others. If this happens, she could allow this child to act as leader and choose the children who are to join in the play.

Enthusiasm for the dressing-up box often increases because of external factors such as a pantomime or circus moving to the district, a play given in the class by the Junior or Senior School, or by children being watched by the younger children.

Play is often improved by the teacher joining in or watching, or by suggestion.

An overhaul of the contents of the box, the children taking them home for washing or mending, or the addition of one or two new items, stimulates the play when the box is again ready for use.

A box of percussion instruments often leads to the adoption of new ideas.

Later the children ask if other classes, and teachers, can watch. Plans can be discussed with the whole class, and preparations for entertainment on a larger scale got under way, chairs arranged and numbered, the pay-box (clothes horse) set up, and tickets prepared.

When this happens, the class as a whole, or at least those who wish to, can be led to volunteer their help, and in the afternoon a session can be used for this activity.

The introduction of gramophone records adds to the success of the children's play with the dressing-up clothes; the children will often ask the teacher to play for a dance or procession. The teacher herself can suggest certain effects with the percussion instruments, but the children also often have good ideas and suggestions to make if encouraged.

Drawing on Teacher's Big Blackboards

Two children working together, are provided with a special tin of attractive coloured chalks and large T's and B B rubbers. Use white chalk first, then coloured later to keep the interest alive in this popular activity.

Individual Sacks of Bricks

When these are used the children should be encouraged to find a suitable out-of-the-gangway place in which to build.

Note. For some time it may be necessary for quite a large group of children to have no alternative to that of using the main materials of the classroom—B.B.'s, bead threading, paper cutting, "Plasticine," looking at picture books in the quiet corner, or round the teacher's chair. Even if this is so, if the teacher spends time with the groups, gives them something interesting to do or make, such as a wind toy, or shows them how to make a cardboard wheel look real, or asks each one what they are about to make and shows that she is interested in what they do, they will retain their interest and think of original things and sometimes work together creating a worthwhile picture or model between them.

Cutting and pasting, spreading paper for

pasting, putting paste brushes, scissors, etc., away is good preparation for using the making box.

A class handwork lesson in cutting is useful and may be directed to decorating a set of tidy boxes, or the making of new work books, or a news book.

Woodwork

This may arise through the children watching men at work in school, or by seeing the teacher adapting a box for a book shelf, or through the News period or discussion times.

Wood. This can be begged from coffin makers, Borough Engineers, local Parks Superintendents, and factories. Orange and apple boxes from local shops will do, and it will generally be found that fathers are helpful. Wheels of all sizes can be obtained from wood turners.

The tools required are—

Hammers, 2 4 to each teacher at first
1 brace, 1 doz bits $\frac{1}{8}$ in., $\frac{1}{4}$ in., $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
1 pliers
1 pincers
2 bench hooks
1 screwdriver
2 coping saws
2 bradaws
2 rasps, 8 in.
4 clamps (there are various sizes)

Nails 2 in., 1½ in., 1 in., ¾ in. round and oval stored in 1-lb jam jars. Hammers and saws and pincers

A tin of nails would be the first to be introduced, to the youngest ones maybe hammers only.

Chisels $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. These should *never* be left unsupervised with infants. Place cork on the ends, and see that they are always given back into the teacher's charge.

The old-fashioned desks are quite suitable for woodwork benches when used with bench-hook clamps. A builder's plank across two lots or even on the floor is another substitute for a proper bench. Boy's Home Working made admirable benches before the war.

Paint. Woolworth's have cheap paint, 1 lb. or 2 lb. tins, and Dryads supply schools enamels in many colours. Mix a little turps to make the paint thinner.

For equipment made by the teacher an undercoat is usually essential if the articles are toys or tins.

Brushes. 1 in., 1½ in. The school could have one or two sets of four, until a set is available for each teacher. Keep in water from day to day, but clean thoroughly in turps if they are not to be used for some time.

To protect the floor, it is necessary to have a supply of large sheets of tough packing paper for the use of all classes. This should be easily accessible, dried after use and replaced.

Stain. Have ¼-lb. tins of aniline dye powder, red, yellow, blue, black.

Small surfaces can be dipped. Use a brush for large surfaces. Stain brushes should be kept for separate colours. All stains soak in deeply but dry almost immediately. Polish with white wax or floor polish.

Poster Colour. If other media are unavailable, poster colour may be used, and can be varnished,

Waterproof Coloured Inks. These can be used if wood is sized first and polished after ink has been applied. Rough wood should be well sand-papered before applying paint or colour.

Children could be given little commissions such as to bring, or buy on the way to school, sandpaper (coarse, fine or medium), nails (1 in. 2 in., ½ in., oval or round). The nails could be collected in jam jars, and labels for these made in front of the children.

When interest in woodwork has been aroused, the teacher may arrange a visit to the iron-mongers to buy for example tools, paint, or anything else that is needed.

The teacher, having prepared the shop-keeper and gone over the ground first, and having discussed with the children what they will need, and encouraged them to ask at home for permission to shop, may now give to the children the task of making purchases.

In doing this they will remember words used in the activity such as, for example—

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|
| gallon | inch wide | width |
| pliers | inch long | narrow |
| pincers | oval, round | tenon saw |
| glue-pot | nails, screws | backsaw |
| sawing board | brads, tacks, etc | |

Painting

In the Choosing Time, two, four, or six children according to space and equipment available may be chosen to paint. This activity could be made available after the teacher has

once or twice shown what is expected. She may paint a picture of an experience she and the children have shared, such as a Guy Fawkes' bonfire, or the making of a snow-man, or the picture could portray a visit to see baby chicks in a neighbouring garden, or the finding of a frog in a sand-pit and watching altogether to see it leap.

Or again, while the children watch her write with the brush, the teacher could make a notice asking help of other classes in bringing 1-lb. and 2-lb. jam jars to hold the paint, or for tins suitable for holding the paint brushes. To begin with you will need say—

½ dozen jars, 2 jars for each of the primary colours. In each, place ½ in. of powder paint with 1 in. of water.

A tin of 6 brushes, medium size.

Two easels, or 4 pieces of plywood approximately 24 in. × 16 in. Old poster show cards will do. Children often like painting on the floor.

Newspaper or kitchen paper for clipping with bull-dog clips or clothes pegs on to the easels.

If no water is available near the classroom, a brush kept in each jar of paint is a simple way to begin, eliminating the necessity for washing brushes when children need change of colour. Even if water is available, this is likely to be a good way to begin, with four or five year olds. A jug or jar of clean water for washing brushes can be introduced later, and when the children have more control of their movements and painting. At that time a pail of water from which they can refill their own jar and another into which they can tip the dirty water should be provided together with sets of colours on trays one tray to be shared between two.

1m trays holding six jars can be kept near to the painting corner at first, agreement being reached as to their most suitable "home" when choosing time is over.

A later development in organization and material comes when children are more experienced. A patty tin is set for each child with a little powder colour in each tin. A new colour, black or white or grey is added, and the children learn to mix their own colours with water from their own small water pot. This is now a small fish-paste jar instead of the larger 1-lb. jar with which they began their adventure with paint.

Coloured sugar paper, brown wrapping paper, tissue paper of all shapes and sizes add further experience and experiment.

Painting as a Class Activity

- (i) Trays with 3 colours, each in a jam-jar
- (ii) Trays with 3 colours, each in a jam-jar, and a jar of water
- (iii) If easels are used--
 - 6 colours (jars) shared between 2
 - 1 jam jar with 4 brushes, 1 large, 1 small, 2 medium (for 2 children)
- (iv) Later, powder colour in patty tins and jar of water and cake tin for mixing

Painting materials for class lessons can be shared by a whole school if teachers check with children and ensure that all equipment and materials are properly stored after use. If there is a lack of cupboard space an orange box with shelves is a good substitute. You will also need -

2-lb jam jars for mixed paint

Sets of small paste jars (try and collect uniform sets)

Paint brushes, 40 of each size. This number is sufficient for a fair-sized school of 300 children and for one painting lesson a week. This number is sometimes not always necessary.

Tins labelled "Large," "Medium," "Small," to hold a number of brushes in each

Powder paint

Programme of School Day

The programme of the School day must be a flexible one with certain routine procedures fixed to ensure serenity and a rhythm which must be present if each child is to feel secure, and to grow in concentration and stability.

The day is divided mostly into active lively periods, varying from 1 to 1½ hours in length, and shorter quiet periods. No rigid time signal is necessary, as there should be a calm unhurried tempo and atmosphere. There should, of course, be accepted times for Playground break, for use of hall for dinner or music, or to allow for another teacher's use of the room occupied. Changes of this kind have to be strictly adhered to in order to prevent interference with the arrangements of other classes. The quieter periods of the day could be earmarked for the following *Look and Listen Activities* -

1. (a) Stories and Songs, Rhymes, Music, etc.
- (b) Demonstrations by children and teacher, handwork techniques, acting, puppets, etc.
- (c) Observations - animals, plants, happenings of the moment outside and inside, exhibi-

tions—group or individual, class, or another school.

(d) Appreciation - walks, visits, expeditions, within school area and beyond it.

2. Individual quiet games and occupations leading to good habits of learning go on while the teacher takes other groups, or individuals. These periods become the periods for the learning of reading and writing and number.

Teachers should be free to arrange their quieter teaching periods when they feel they are likely to be most beneficial. They may be held even in the afternoon if, for example, a walk or expedition, or a play from another class has prevented the teaching at the usual time.

Some teachers arrange for two quiet periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, but even when such an arrangement is made it is not rigidly carried out.

Some teachers have their free periods in the afternoon, but allow for a P.E. or games lesson every morning, and leave something out for a short period, say two days or even a week, alternating reading one week, with number another so as to ensure a balanced arrangement.

The emphasis in schools varies to meet the needs of the district. Conditions and accommodation too are different and the space available must affect, for example, the amount of music and movement that can be done with large classes. Consequently the pattern of the day's work and play will vary because of the lack of uniformity in the conditions which determine its pattern.

Nature Experiences

All children in an Infants' School should have opportunities for playing in natural surroundings, feeling the wind, hearing the wind in the trees, watching the blades of grass bend to the wind, picking dandelions for the lunch tables, running through the autumn leaves and helping to sweep them up, feeding a bonfire and picking up the charcoal afterwards to draw with - these and numberless other such experiences should be the lot of all our children. The school should provide opportunities for children and teacher to investigate, explore, observe, appreciate and experiment together. In some districts, however, such contact with Nature is only possible

Suggested Programme for a Day in the Infant School

9.30 Arrival and greeting of children, registration, dinner money

Before-school activity:—

Beads, boards, picture books,
scissors and paper, "Plasticine"

News Time

10.0 Free Activity

Creative

Sand
Water
Clay
Paint

Constructive

Bricks, steps and planks
Woodwork
Making-box

Imaginative

Wendy house
Dressing up
Shops

Physical

Balls, hoops
Ropes, skittles
"Jungle Jim"

11.0 Washing preparing lunch -lunch
Clearing away, washing up
Break

11.30 Assembly.

11.45 Quiet Time Nursery, individual and quieter group games, leading to reading and writing or number activities in upper classes

12.20 Music, poems, Songs, Walks, story

1.45 Class painting and P.E.

Class music, movement or acting
Expeditions, visits

Group or class handwork and P.F. (generally in connection with needs of the Free Activity period, or with acting for theatre or circus in progress)

3.3.15 Break

3.15-4. Stories, dramatization, music Acting for another class or for school

Alternative Programme

9.0-10.0 Free Activity

10-10.20 Assembly

10.20-11.0 Games or news

11-11.20 Break

11.20-12.0 Individual occupations

1.30-1.45 Story or music.

1.45-3.0 Group handwork or class handwork
Demonstrations (Plays, puppets, dances)

3.0-3.15 Break

3.15-3.45 Music

after long-distance excursions are taken. Even at these schools something can be done to link the child's experience with the country.

Visits to greengrocers for orange boxes, for building play, or to the grocer's for a storage box can give much pleasure and experience—a visit to buy a cabbage or lettuce for the snails that Jimmy brought without warning, and all the looking and observation that goes on while the greengrocer serves—the colour of the radishes, the shape and colour of the apples, the price labels in the window, all these open children's eyes to things not noticed before, loosen tongues and increase the children's knowledge of their surroundings.

Even a visit of the class to another teacher's room, to borrow her book on "toadstools" because of the fungus that pushed through the playground asphalt leads to new thoughts and a wider knowledge of growing things.

If the teacher should bring frogspawn and show it at News Time and then take the children on a visit to another class to see tadpoles feeding in watercress, a useful lesson is learned that can make up a little for the absence of more beautiful and natural surroundings outside the school.

In a quiet listening period after the clearing away of Free Activity material has been done, or even while it is in progress, the teacher can record some of the observations made on these little excursions by painting or sketching while the children watch and remark and make suggestions, "Paint a baby one"; "Give him a yellow spot on his forehead", "Make him jump in the air"—as they sit at her feet in the semi-circle.

This form of recording or re-living an experience that all the class have had together is an excellent way in which to establish a serene and yet concentrated listening attitude on the part of the children. It will be found that this has a calming effect after a noisier activity or following a stimulating exciting expedition.

Materials

Jam jars with powder colour.

Jar with large, small and medium paint brush.

Jar of water.

Plywood board 20 in. × 30 in. or old advertisement card.

Bulldog clip or clothes peg.
Sheet of kitchen paper.

The teacher might use this occasion to introduce painting materials to the children for use in the next day's choosing-time, and show the children the place to keep the tray of paints, etc. (see section on *Painting*).

The paintings or drawings on the bulletin board can become the News Sheets, a collection

seaweed,
a chrysalis found in the garden,
a magnifying glass,
a prism,
an aquarium,
a spot of mercury,
caterpillars in vivarium
spirit level,
a compass,
a tape measure.

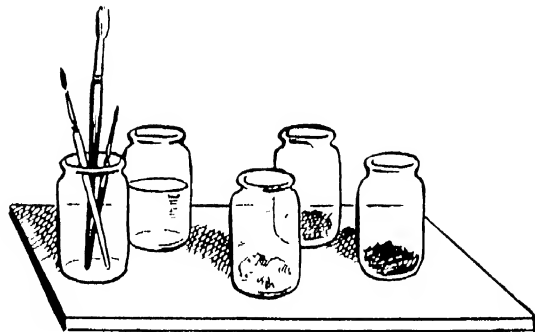


FIG. 6

Materials required for recording of Nature Observations

of the records of the experiences the children have had over a period of time.

At times they can turn the pages quietly over as they show their mothers, the Head Teacher, or children or teacher from another class when they pay visits.

Skilful introduction of the printed word, names or captions, makes this "news paper" interesting early reading material, but care should be exercised lest undue emphasis on the reading kills the interest aroused.

A Nature Table can from time to time provide a source of keen interest and observation in a classroom. On it a "Things to look at" notice is placed with a few objects such as—

a fat fir cone,

Not all should be shown at one time, but a selection at suitable times during the term.

Happenings inside the school and outside, the events of home, school and street, all can be dealt with and used to lighten the barren environment of the sordid district of some town schools. For instance a discussion on —

Where the water goes from the drain pipe.

The caretaker—his work and responsibilities.

Watching the roadmender the window-cleaner—the carpenter.

Through active pleasure derived from talking about things in the presence of those things, children's curiosity grows and reaches for satisfaction, and grows again.

Classroom Library or Book Corner

Apart from books used for the formal teaching of reading, there should be a nook or corner in every classroom where the children can help themselves to a book without calling upon the teacher. Before school begins or after clearing away during the Free Activity period, while waiting for the rest of the children to finish clearing up, or during an emergency when the teacher has been called away from the class, the children will need no encouragement to go to a well-selected collection of books and choose one to look at.

During the Quiet Period, when the children have finished their reading, games, or schedule of work given them, or while waiting to read to the teacher, they will enjoy browsing among these books.

In the Nursery, animal picture books, books of favourite nursery rhymes with pictures, books of trains, ships, the circus, scrap books made by Senior Departments, favourite stories already told or read by the teacher, liberally illustrated, should be arranged so that they can be taken and replaced easily by every child.

Books with attractive bindings, compelling pictures and varied in interest, need to be added from time to time to the original collection. Those which the children cease to use should be removed and passed after repair to children in other classes.

It is the teacher's role to keep the collection up to standard by adding books which illumine and illustrate subjects of interest that have arisen and for which information is needed.

She may do this in many ways. One could be a showing of some of the most attractive pictures to the class, or by a reading of an especially illuminating extract that has bearing on a visit or a problem that the group is in process of solving.

This is an important part of helping children in the intelligent use of books, from the Nursery upwards.

The collection of books should be carefully and constantly supervised, and the range extended both in subject matter and reading difficulty to meet the children's ever widening

interests as they pass to the upper classes in the school. Books on how to make and do, and geographical magazines should be included.

A School Library, or Quiet Room, or Quiet Corner is desirable also, and this should be open to certain classes who know and observe the rules of washed hands, the care of books, and how to replace them after use. Books could be arranged on the dining tables during the winter, as in the reading room of a public library, and a teacher who knows the books well and is aware of individual children's needs should be present to advise.

Assemblies

The older children in an Infants' School can meet during the day to share their news, hear each others' experiences, sing songs or hymns together. Very young children should not, of course, be submitted to crowded rooms, but the older children love the ceremony of meeting together in the main room of a school building. This may be done daily or weekly or on alternate days, and enables the children to share with each other things that have interested them most, or to hear of plans for the future. Whatever happens there, or however often the meeting takes place, it should be an enjoyable time for the children. The Head Teacher is the compère, and naturally the loving and happy atmosphere with which she leads the proceeding comes from her attitude and from the things she selects for inclusion in the ten minutes or more given for this purpose. It should be a serene yet lively and fast-moving experience.

A low table with a low chair are all that are necessary. The children, sitting in semicircles with space for other children to move in between the rows where they can see and be seen, complete the setting.

If the school is a large one it is better to have a section of the school at a time, either the older ones and then the younger, or sometimes combining the age groups so that the little children meet the older ones and benefit from their more experienced ways, talk and behaviour. In their turn the older children watch the smaller ones give their contribution in song, dance, rhyme, mime, or news, or show things they have

made or good ideas they have had in their classes.

The Head Teacher can use these occasions to introduce new communal equipment, or to give the caretaker or cleaners or school workers a chance to ask for help and co-operation in keeping the school tidy. They may show or tell of something they have done or made or brought to help in the smooth running of the school. Children could be made to realize how each one has a part and place in the school community. A teacher, or a parent who can play an instrument or is a craftsman can be encouraged to call in this period and help to show how they are also part of a school community.

If a teacher sings or plays concertina, violin, or mouth organ, the children often come in or move out to the rhythms chosen. Some children enjoy standing on a box or "speaking chair" and telling "News" or answering questions put to them by the children listening. When this is done the rule that only the one pointed to or looked at speaks is necessary.

Children soon realize the need for clear speech and gain confidence in facing a group, and the group in their turn see the need for quiet, learn to listen and to speak in turn—a very difficult stage for little children to reach.

The build-up of the assembly atmosphere with a nice balance of formality with informality is a difficult thing to achieve. There is no limit, of course, to the things that can take place at assembly. Here is a short list—

Behaviour problems sometimes discussed.
Head Teacher singing new song.

New singing game, core of songs built up.
Telling story.

Telling of new plan.

Child telling or singing or dancing.

Class giving a dance, poem, song.

Listening to directions as to how children are to disperse encourages good listening.

The foregoing is an attempt to help teachers whose experience is limited to the traditional methods, to adopt less rigid procedures.

It must be understood, however, that there are ways other than those set out which are equally satisfactory. The organization of the Free Activity period round the specified material is only a beginning. As the children gain in self-reliance and acquire stability of attitudes, the control of this period by a group talk and the limiting of choice by a controlling of how many and who shall play and with what, can be dispensed with. The children will then go straight to their activity and continue with it from day to day. The activity will grow and children will plan and carry out their plans learning much in the process.

After the Free Activity period, the balance between individual, group, and class teaching must be preserved. Communal dancing, singing, listening to stories, P.E. and games take in the class as a whole. So too would class discussions at which subjects such as the following are considered

New plans for the day or week

Proposed visits.

Proposed play

Planning a party, etc.

TESTS FOR ABILITY AND PROGRESS

ALL formal tests are out of place in the kindergarten; that is to say, little children should never realize that they are being tested. Whatever tests are given should seem to them just a part of their everyday work. Records of a child's progress in the formation of good habits are far more important than a measure of achievement. But sometimes, for the teacher's own guidance, tests are necessary to show her where her little ones most need her help. The most useful types of tests in the Infant School are---

1. Intelligence or mental tests, and
2. Easy reading tests.

Tests of Intelligence

All examinations or tests given in school are in one sense mental tests. But we keep the term *mental tests* for such tests as aim at gauging natural ability rather than knowledge of school attainments. This, of course, is a distinction very difficult to maintain, for it is impossible to devise a test of ability which does not at the same time test knowledge.

There is, however, this great difference between ordinary school examinations and mental tests which it is helpful to keep in mind.

1. *Examinations* test knowledge which the pupil does not require for everyday life—learning to spell, or to read; learning dates, etc.—knowledge he can avoid.

2. *Mental tests* test knowledge which a person of ordinary intelligence cannot possibly avoid; the daily happenings of life thrust it on him.

Just what intelligence is is discussed in the Section on Psychology.

Defining the Mental Age

The term "mental age" has been given precise meaning by the results from mental tests (tests of mental ability) which have been given to thousands of children of all ages and classes during recent years.

Most readers are probably familiar with some forms of mental tests, such as the mental tests which were widely used in the army, or one of the many tests which are being used in schools to select the especially dull, and the especially bright pupils. The best known of the latter are the Stanford Revision of the Binet-Simon Intelligence Tests, which we will call briefly the Binet Tests.

The Binet tests were originally standardized for Parisian children, but they have been translated and adapted to London children by Mr. Cyril Burt. Below we give some examples of Mr. Cyril Burt's revision of these tests. Notice that these tests are all predominantly linguistic.

Binet Tests (Burt's Translation and Revision)

Age Three

1. Understanding simple commands.

Instructions. "Show me (point to, put your finger on)—

- (1) your nose,
- (2) your eyes,
- (3) your mouth."

Evaluation: All should be correctly performed, but free encouragement may first be given.

5. Naming simple objects.

Materials: A penny, a closed knife, and a common kind of key.

Instructions: "What is that?" or "What is this called?" showing each object separately.

Evaluation: All three must be named, but slight errors, such as "money," "pennies," for "a penny," are allowable.

Age Four

7. Repeating syllables.

Instructions: "Listen again, and say this after me." (The phrases should be pronounced deliberately and with expression. Begin with No. III; but if the child

remains silent the examiner may give him first a shorter sentence (I or II), and then try III again)—

- I (2 syllables). "Father."
- II (4 syllables). "My hat and shoes."
- III (6 syllables). "I am cold and hungry." (Age 4.)
- IV (8 syllables). "Here is the cloth; my hands are clean."
- V (10 syllables). "His name is Jack: he's such a naughty dog." (Age 5.)
- VI (12 syllables). "It is raining outside, but we can stay indoors."
- VII (14 syllables). "While Jack was doing his lessons, I caught a little mouse."
- VIII (16 syllables). "We are going for a walk: Mary, let me see your pretty hat." (Age 7.)
-
- XIII (26 syllables). "The other morning I saw in the street a little yellow dog. Little Maurice has spoilt his new apron." (Age 14.)

Evaluation: Allow no error at all, except mispronunciation due to speech defects (Binet's sentences appear to have been deliberately composed of two clauses. This seems unfortunate, as even an intelligent child may forget one. In translating them we have endeavoured to keep the general sense of the original, while making the phraseology more natural for a child.)

As Applied to Older Children

Those interested in the Binet Tests should read *Mental Tests* by Dr. P. B. Ballard (Hodder and Stoughton). A very short study of the Binet tests will show that they are unsuited for the upper forms. They were not devised for the discovery of bright children, but for the detection of the dull.

When using the Binet tests, the usual rule is to start with the group of tests just *below* the child's chronological age, and to allow the child to think it is a game.

To estimate the child's mental age, the examiner regards the age at which all tests are

passed as the *base age*, and should add one-fifth of a year for every additional test belonging to any of the higher ages.

It is now the custom to give the final result of the Intelligence Tests in the form of an Intelligence Quotient, a method first thought of by the German psychologist, Stern.

Finding the Intelligence Quotient

The Intelligence Quotient is found by dividing the mental age by the real age. If, for example, a child's real age is six and his mental age four, his intelligence quotient is 0.66. This result is usually multiplied by 100 and written as 66.

Binet asserts that the amount of retardation which determines a child as defective is two years when he is under nine, and three years when he is past his ninth birthday. In terms of the intelligence quotient the border-line between normality and deficiency is said to be somewhere about 0.75. No cases where the intelligence quotient falls between 0.7 and 0.8 are quite free from doubt.

Work of School Psychologist

In some schools—this applies chiefly to American schools—the Binet tests are given to all children who enter the kindergarten and first grade. Through the co-operation of the Department of Psychology, a psychologist devotes one or two mornings a week to the Infant Schools. Besides giving individual and group tests, she studies unusual or difficult children, and gives advice as to how best to treat them. This is done in the Horace Mann Kindergarten and First Grade. (The First Grade corresponds to our Transition Class.)

The findings in this school for one year were—

| | Lowest | Highest | Median |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| <i>Kindergarten—</i> | | | |
| Chronological age | 2 1 | 6 0 | 4 7 |
| Mental age | 5 | 7 4 | 5 5 |
| Intelligence quotient | 84 | 145 | 115 |
| <i>First Grade—</i> | | | |
| Chronological age | 5 5 | 6 7 | 5 10 |
| Mental age | 5 10 | 8 10 | 7 1 |
| Intelligence quotient | 94 | 146 | 118 |

Dealing With the Difficult Child

The establishment of day and residential schools for the purpose of caring for those children who are educationally sub-normal, has to a substantial extent relieved normal classes of the special problems created by the attendance of these unfortunate children.

and his surroundings, home life, school and play.

Mental Harmony is Essential

It is the great work of the mistress in the Kindergarten or Infant School to teach her little ones who are healthy in mind and body

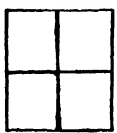
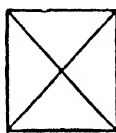
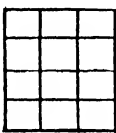
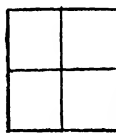
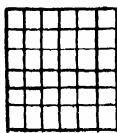
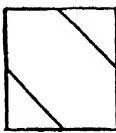


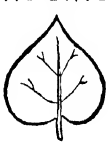


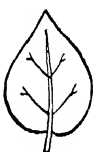
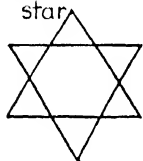
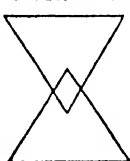
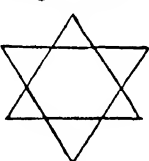

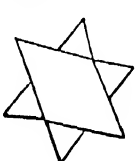
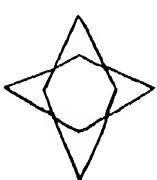
| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Mark the first little window</p>  <p>*</p> | <p>Find the other window like it and mark this window. <u>Test 2.</u></p>      <p>*</p> |
| <p>Mark the first leaf</p>  <p>*</p> | <p>Now mark the other leaf that is just like it.</p>      <p>*</p> |
| <p>Mark the first star</p>  <p>*</p> | <p>Mark the other star that looks just like it.</p>      <p>*</p> |

FIG. 1

Extract from Detroit First Grade Intelligence Test (Children 6-7)

There still remain the border-line cases in addition to those children who are difficult without necessarily belonging to the educationally sub-normal group. To help the teacher to deal with the problems created by these children, many education authorities appoint qualified psychiatrists whose services are available when needed. They not only provide the skill to understand the special needs of each child, but give guidance as to what remedial action should be taken. Often the aim must be the establishment of harmony between the child

how to remain so throughout their life, and to discover at once those little ones who, for some cause or another, are not in harmony with their surroundings. With these little ones, the psychologist may help us with regard to mental ailments as the doctor helps us with bodily ailments, so that harmony between mind and body may be restored, and the child's personality set free to grow. One must beware of separating mind and body in any form of treatment; they are both functions of the nervous system, only too frequently discordant.

Other Forms of Intelligence Test

Other special forms of mental tests have recently been developed for use with kindergarten and other junior children (children under ten). Fig. 1 shows the Detroit First Grade Intelligence Test. It is suitable for children of six and seven. The form which the children

"Show me the thing that is up in the sky. Show me the thing that flies. Show me the thing that gives light." The examiner marks with a pencil the object or picture to which the pupil points. The correct answers that pupils of a given age make on such tests may be averaged, and a set of standard scores for various ages thus determined. Then, if a given pupil's total score on

Test 1

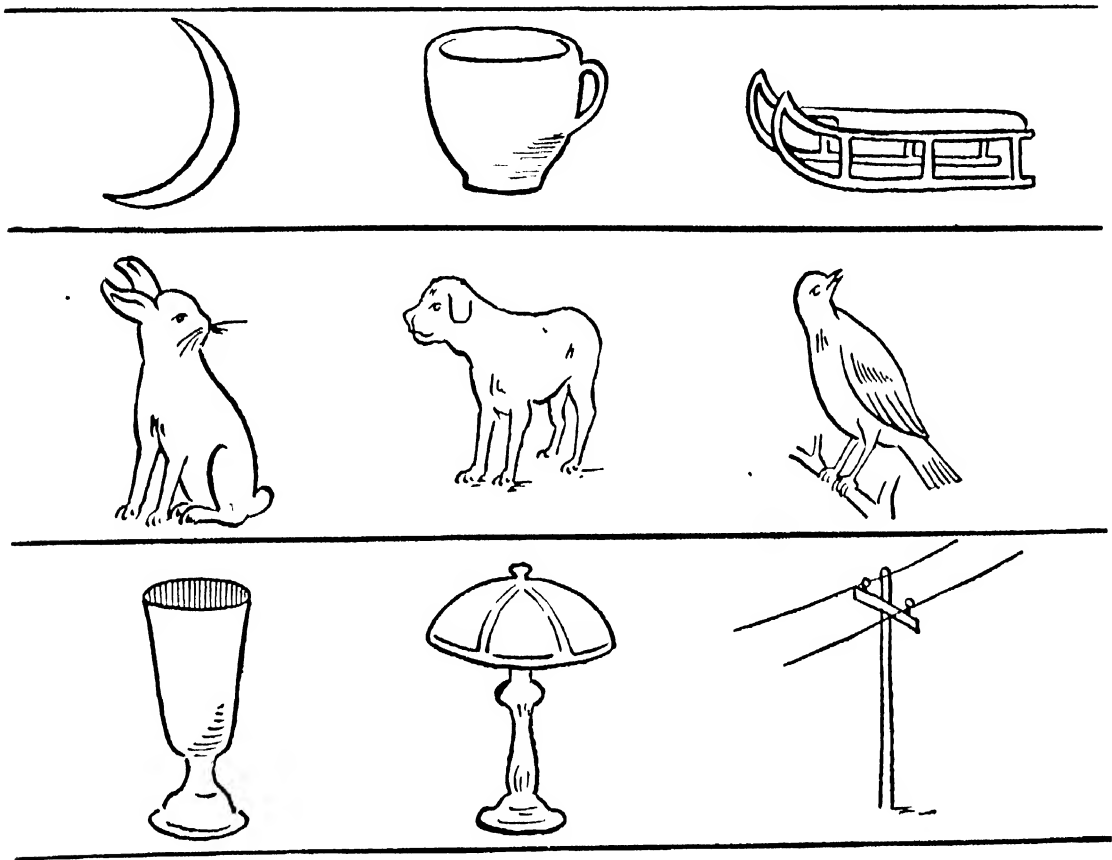


FIG. 2

From the Detroit Kindergarten Test

use is the same, without the printed directions and the asterisks

The Detroit Kindergarten Test

Fig. 2 shows an example of the Detroit Kindergarten Test. This test is given individually to each pupil by the examiner, who (in the case of Test I which is here reproduced) says, as he points successively to each line,

the tests equals the average score made by five-year-old children, his mental age is said to be five years. Chronologically, however, if he is very bright, he may be only three years old; or if he is very dull he may be seven or even eight years of age.

Otis Test for Transition Class

Fig. 3 shows the Otis test. This, like the

Detroit First Grade Intelligence Test, is a form of similarities test. The child is told to look at the first three pictures and see in what way they are alike. Then he has to select from among the other five pictures the one that is most like the first three, and put a cross beneath it.

Overlapping of Ages

When mental tests are given to large groups of children from five to seven years of age, it is found that many of the children of five are mentally more mature and capable than many of the children of six and seven. A striking example of the overlapping of the mental ages of Kindergarten and Transition children is given in a table in Terman's *The Intelligence of School*

Children Prefer to be Grouped According to Chronological Age

But it often happens that kindergarten children who have sufficient mental ability for reading must be kept with children of their own chronological age. Amongst these reasons are the following—

(1) Some children are not allowed to enter the Transition until they are six, and

(2) The fact that little children are usually happier when associated with others of their own age and size than when placed with older and larger children.

It is therefore desirable to have in the kindergarten room facilities for teaching reading to the small group of children mentally ripe for

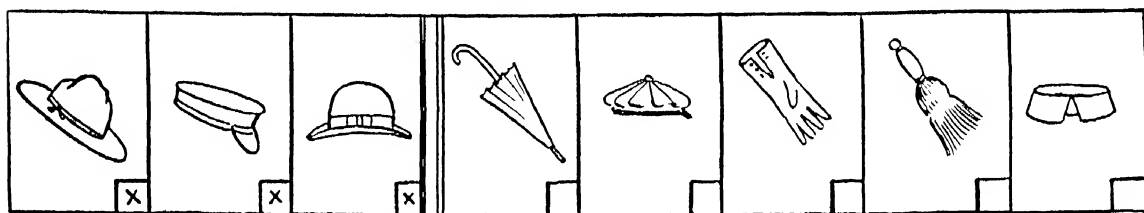


FIG. 3

Otis Similarities Test

Children, in which Chapters III and IV deal particularly with individual differences among children in the Kindergarten and the Transition classes, and provide us with the best information of the overlapping to be found there. This overlapping is of great importance when organizing the Infant School and deciding on the curriculum.

Take, for example, the question of reading. No attempt should be made to teach reading until the child is six years old mentally. (Intelligence tests have proved that it is only at this age that the child is really ready to deal with the complex process of reading.) Many children, however, of kindergarten age are quite capable, as mental tests show, of doing the intellectual work of the Transition class; while, on the other hand, some Transition and Standard I children have such low mental ability that they need primarily constructive activities and games instead of reading.

it, and in the Transition and Standard I opportunities for more motor activities for the children of low mental ability.

One must remember that one cannot altogether ignore the chronological age and group one's children according to mental age, for the important reason given above that little ones are happier with those of their own age. A child of seven may be mentally as capable as a child of ten or eleven, but the child of eleven has a maturer way of looking at things, an older even if not wiser way, which will spoil the fresh outlook of the seven-year-olds.

Mental tests may help the teacher, but they cannot take the place of the wise judgment of the teacher.

Uses of Intelligence Tests

It may be well to summarize here some of the ways in which mental tests can help us—

(1) Through intelligence tests we can find

out when a child is ready to begin reading. If a child is forced to begin reading too soon, he becomes discouraged, and a permanent dislike of reading may result. On the other hand, if reading is deferred too long, interest in reading may wane, and bad habits of application result.

(2) In certain doubtful cases, mental tests help the teacher to decide whether a child is really mentally unfit for the work, or is merely lazy, and so to measure out the work for the child in proportion to his mental ability. In this way many poor children will avoid the habit of failure.

(3) They can help us to decide whether such clever children as the little Stoner child owe their intellectual achievements to their superior training (as their parents or teachers often believe), or to superior mental ability. This is a very important point.

(4) They can help us to estimate the value of new methods of mind training which are advertised so confidently from time to time. The Montessori method and various systems of motor training and sense training for the feeble-minded might well be checked by some forms of mental tests.

(5) They can help us to find out to what extent a child's mental performances are determined by environment, and to what extent by heredity. Apparent mental inferiority will be found to be often the result of inferior home and school training.

The Limitations of Intelligence Tests

(1) They do not test *moral character*. The

precocious child, in later life, lacks the perseverance necessary for success, and is beaten by the slower child.

(2) They may lead us into the error of putting the mentally quick little one with older children of the same mental age, and so spoil too soon his childlike outlook on life.

(3) They do not test ability to draw, paint, model, play the piano, etc. In other words, they do *not* measure the *entire mentality* of the subject, but only *general intelligence*. We cannot use them for the discovery of *exceptional abilities* in the subjects mentioned above, nor in such subjects as mathematics, oratory, salesmanship, etc.

It is, therefore, most important that no teacher should use intelligence tests until she understands both their uses *and* their limitations, and knows the purpose for which she is testing her children.

(4) Test conclusions, if they are dogmatic, are very dangerous. There are many late-developing children who have great potential intellectual gifts, but up to the age of puberty have not developed these gifts. A child of 14, apparently dull at figures, often makes great progress after this age. Facts like these make dogmatism in any tests dangerous.

The following books will prove useful—

Mental Tests. P. B. Ballard. Hodder and Stoughton.

Group Tests. P. B. Ballard. Hodder and Stoughton.

Mental and Scholastic Tests. Cyril Burt.

The Intelligence of School Children. L. M. Terman.

The Measurement of Intelligence. L. M. Terman.

The last two books are both published by Harrap & Co., from whom can also be obtained *Test Material for the Measurement of Intelligence*, to accompany the last-mentioned book.

TESTS FOR READING IN THE TRANSITION CLASS

TESTS for reading, like all mental tests, can be divided into those that may be administered to a group of readers, and those that must be given to pupils individually.

Group tests usually give a good average measure of the abilities of the group as a whole, as well as a good measure of those children who have no special difficulties with reading.

Individual tests are especially suited for diagnosing the causes of a child's deficiencies in reading, and as a step towards finding a remedy. They should be used very generally for this purpose.

The Haggerty Group Tests

The Picture-Completion Test

These reading tests are among the simplest for children of about the Transition age or older. Fig. 1 shows part of M. E. Haggerty's picture-completion test.

The Haggerty "No—Yes" Test

The children underline No or Yes in answering such questions as the following—

1. Can you eat? No. Yes.
2. Can a hat walk? No. Yes.
3. Can a clock talk? No. Yes.

In some classes, where little ones have not been accustomed to reading exercises similar to these tests, many of them get hardly any answers right. In other classes, where children are used to reading exercises of this type, much better results are, of course, scored.

The Detroit Group Test in Word Recognition

This is also a test suitable for children of six to seven years of age. In this test there is a series of pictures, and a parallel series of words or groups of words arranged in a different order

from the pictures. The child has to draw a line from each word or group of words to the corresponding picture. Children enjoy this test. Sections of this test are shown in Fig. 2.

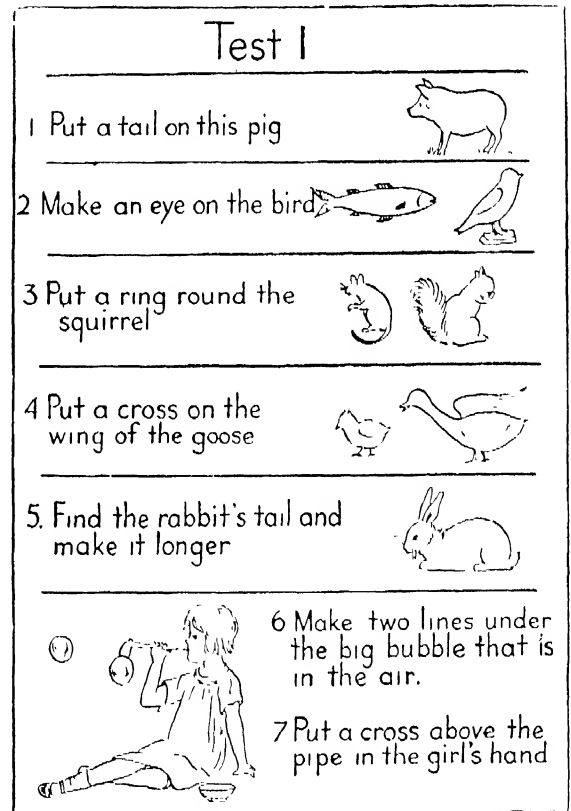


FIG. 1

The Haggerty Picture Completion Test
(A Test for Measuring Reading,
for Children 6-7)

The Minneapolis Reading Test

(Used in Minneapolis public schools for children of 6-7)

This is a very interesting test and seems particularly suitable for the transition class, but too easy for Standard I.

* Series of words and sentences are enclosed in rectangles called "boxes." These "boxes"

are numbered consecutively from 1 to 16. The following are the directions given to the children for boxes numbered 1 and 4 which are reproduced in Fig. 3.

Find the first little box, the little box with 1 in front of it. Put your finger on the box. (Pause until all children have found it.) Look at all the words in this box. (Pause

until apparently all the children have read the words.) Draw a line under table. (Pause.)

Now find the box with 4 in front of it. Put your finger on it. (Pause.) Read all the sentences. (Pause.) Find the words that tell what the rat said. (Pause.) Draw a line under them. (Pause.)

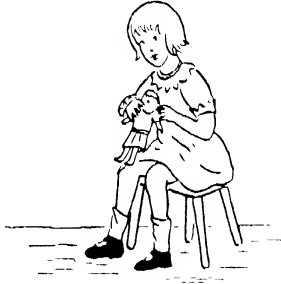

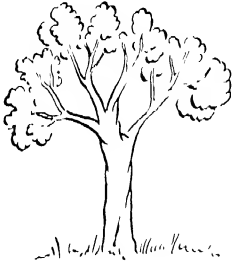
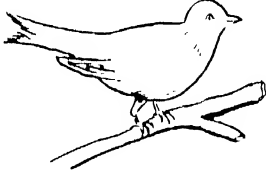
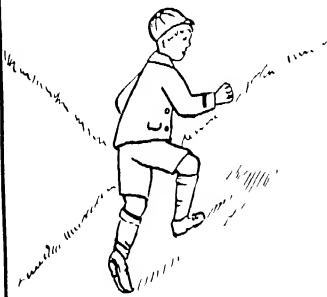

| | | |
|---|--|--|
|  | <p>tree</p> <p>1.</p> |  |
| | <p>boy</p> <p>2.</p> | |
|  | <p>girl</p> <p>3.</p> |  |
| | <p>apple</p> | |
|  | <p>a boy walking up a hill.</p> <p>37.</p> |  |
| | <p>a boy walking down a hill.</p> <p>38.</p> | |

FIG. 2

Extract from Detroit Group Test in Word Recognition

Each "box" is slightly harder as the numbers advance from 1 to 16.

Gates' Reading Tests for Group Testing

(1) *Word Recognition*

Fig. 4 shows part of a page from the Gates *Primary Reading Test*. It is much reduced in size. The child rings around the word that goes with the picture.

(2) *Phrase and Sentence Reading Test*

The children read the words or story that goes above the pictures in Fig. 5; then they find the picture which tells about the words or story, and draw a ring around it.

The pictures are so made as to prevent guessing the right answer by reading correctly any single letter, word, or phrase. This test measures ability to get the thought from the sentences, and gives a good idea of a child's ability to read phrases and sentences typical in vocabulary and form to those found in children's reading books.

(3) *Reading of Paragraphs of Directions.*

Parts of this test are shown in Fig. 6.

Individual Tests (Reading)

Gray's "Oral Reading Test"

Individual tests are suitable for finding out a child's particular difficulties. Gray's *Oral Reading Test* is a good example. (It is published by the Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois.) The following extract is an example of what the child has to read to the examiner—

A fox saw a hen.
The fox said,
"I see a hen.
I want her for dinner."
The hen saw the fox.
She ran fast.
She went to a tree.
The hen said,
"You did not get me, old fox."

There are five different sets of reading material similar to the above and suitable for the child of six or seven.

A child is given a test with one set, and his special difficulties are noted and entered on a record sheet. Then he is given special help for a number of weeks and another test is given, and so on.

The Jones Vocabulary Test

This individual test is also useful in discovering a child's particular difficulties in reading. It includes lists of all the common words found in ten primers. These words are divided into two groups—phonetic and non-phonetic. The

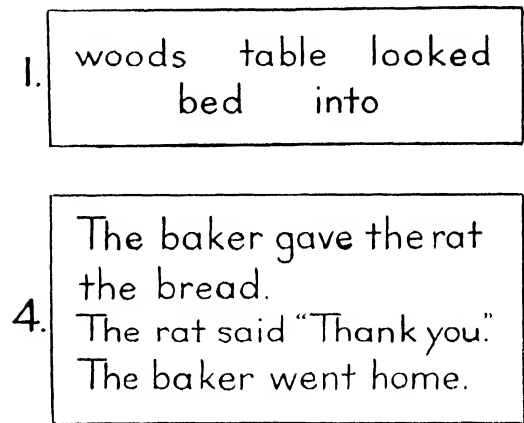


FIG. 3

The Minneapolis Primary Reading Test

child who is being tested is asked to pronounce the words, and a careful record is kept of his errors. This test serves as a measure of the pupil's vocabulary and, to a certain extent, of his phonetic difficulties.

Teachers Should Devise Their Own Tests

From a study of the various tests given, and the books suggested, teachers should be able to make good reading tests for themselves.

Many informal vocabulary tests on the work covered from time to time can be made by the teacher. These might be word element tests: for example, a given word containing a certain phonetic element is given to the children, and they are told to select a number of words containing this identical element from their


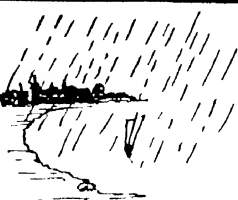
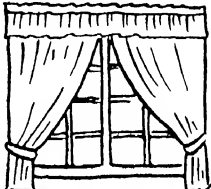
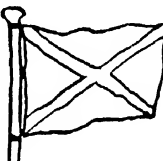
| | |
|---|---|
|  <p>hour soup south soap</p> |  <p>rats rain ran again</p> |
|  <p>winds window finding throw</p> |  <p>frog flag floor clap</p> |

FIG. 4

Extract from Gates' Primary Reading Test

Type 1. Word Recognition

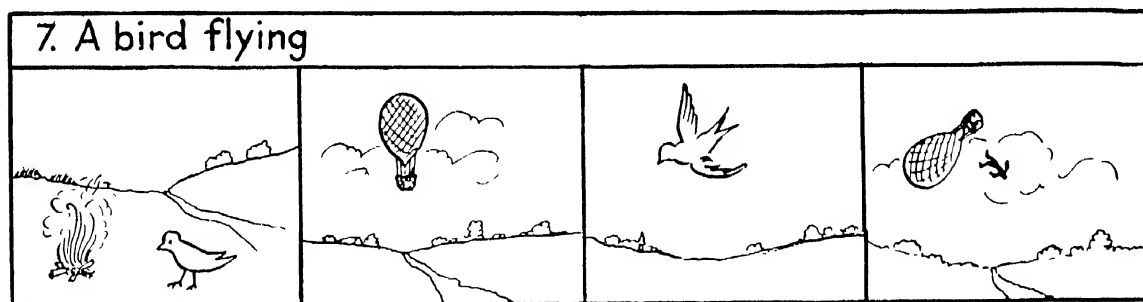


FIG. 5

Extract from Gates' Primary Reading Test

Type 2. Phrase and Sentence Reading

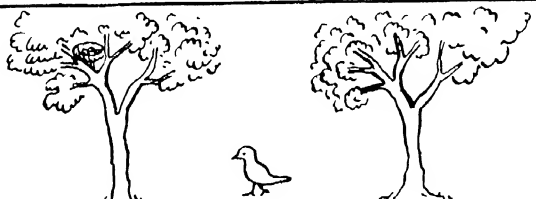

| | |
|--|--|
|  <p>15. Draw a line from the robin to its nest. You will find the nest in the tree to the left side of the picture.</p> |  <p>16. The rabbit and the hen live on the land. The fish lives in the water. Draw a line under the one that lives in the water.</p> |
|--|--|

FIG. 6

Extract from Gates' Primary Reading Test

Type 3. Reading of Paragraphs

readers. If the teacher makes a list in her books of the number of possibilities there are in the given pages, a graded standard for the children can be set up.

Another set of valuable exercises which can be made by the teacher are the *sight word tests*.

The teacher prepares a list of words that the children must know, before attempting reading upon a more difficult scale. She asks each child to pronounce the words on the list, and keeps individual records of such words as are missed. Subsequent vocabulary teaching is based upon these results.

As the children progress in reading, it is necessary to measure comprehension by various tests such as following directions, and the "yes" or "no" type tests, examples of which have already been given.

Standards for Promotion

At the end of the year, and sometimes earlier, the question of promotion has to be considered. In the Infant School the questions that have to be settled are generally these—

(1) Which children in the kindergarten are ready for promotion to an older kindergarten group, or to the Transition classes?

(2) To which of the various Transition classes shall each child go in those schools where there are two or three classes for children of six and seven—one or two classes for the immature children and one or two for the more mature children?

(3) Which children in the Transition classes are fit for Standard I, or Form I, in the Junior School?

In recommending children for promotion the teacher takes into consideration—

(1) The chronological age of the child.

(2) The mental age of the child as shown by the intelligence test or the teacher's estimate.

(3) The child's records. The kind of record used will differ. Various examples have already been given. These are of great value when considering promotion.

In addition to the above, a reading test can be given to the Transition class. (See examples already given of reading tests.) These tests may be group tests or, if there is no doubt about the ability of the majority of the children, a

few individual reading tests can be given to the doubtful ones.

Number Tests (See also Number Training)

If desired, a few *practical* arithmetic tests can be given. These should be individual: for example—

Can you count to fifty when you are playing hide-and-seek or blind-man's buff?

Count fifty while I hide these seven balls and see how quickly you can find them. You have found three; how many are left to be found?

When you play dominoes can you tell what 5 and 5 dots, 6 and 4 dots are, without having to count them each time?

Can you tell the time? etc., etc.

To discover the nature and extent of the individual differences in a group of children as regards number, one must give them many *practical tests*, and must observe in great detail and on frequent occasions each child's responses to various kinds of number situations.

Rational Counting Opposed to Rote Counting

Many teachers give the child more credit than he deserves for his understanding of number, for the words the little child uses may carry little or no meaning to him. Children of six will repeat number names to ten, twenty, or one hundred, with scarcely any real understanding as to what these words mean. Hence the importance of practical tests; let the children count real things, determine the number of objects in a group, etc.

It is interesting to remember that counting thirteen pennies is the six-year level of the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. This means that from two-thirds to three-fourths of six-year-old children chosen at random can do *rational* counting to thirteen. Certainly a much larger proportion can do *rote* counting to this point and beyond.

Finally, health must also be taken into account when considering promotion, but both the child's physical development and his social development will appear on his record card.

RECORD CARDS IN THE INFANTS' SCHOOL

RECORDING children's progress in reading and number is a familiar routine to teachers in Infant Schools, but as freer methods become more widely adopted, it is becoming apparent that, while progress in reading and number is very important, there are other aspects of the child's development, his personal qualities and social responses, which must also be carefully considered. Some teachers have become anxious and doubtful about the value of methods which no longer permit them to assess children's development confidently in terms of marks and position in class, and need guidance in making observations and assessing progress.

Individual differences in children have been the subject of educational research for many years and these differences are never more obvious than in Infant classes, particularly when methods of teaching are followed which allow each child to develop his individual abilities at his own rate. Since we have changed our methods of teaching, it seems that our task is to find new methods of assessment which will lay the right weight of emphasis upon every aspect of the child's growth and development, so that we regard him as a whole person and an independent individual. There is widespread feeling among teachers that a system of recording observations over a long period is the most valuable way of assessing development, and not only increases our knowledge and understanding of children but helps to ensure continuity of methods and treatment throughout the child's school life.

Schools are working under great difficulties, and the work of the class teacher is increased by the constant need for improvisation in supplying adequate material and equipment for large classes. The class teacher, however, will be the first to appreciate the value of a full record of information provided for each child when he enters her class and, in spite of difficulties, will realize that her observations will help successive teachers.

In order to maintain continuity, a system of cumulative record cards is essential. Record cards bring together, in a convenient form, information about the child's intellectual ability, his social and emotional development, and about his personal qualities and difficulties.

We shall first review in more detail the purpose of keeping record cards, and assess their value.

The Purpose of Record Cards

1. *To Increase Awareness in the Infants' School of the Wide Range of Individual Differences in Children.* In schools for older children, we can hardly be unaware of profound differences, especially intellectual and emotional differences, which exist in any group, and indeed, where possible, we make special provision for children who differ markedly from their fellows. If we trace the histories back, we find that the brightest and the dullest child in a group of eleven-year-olds were once classmates, in the same Infant school. We must become aware of these differences as early as possible in the child's school career, if we are to develop the capacity of each child, the brightest and the dullest, to the full. Teachers find that keeping records for each child helps them to observe more carefully behaviour and performance in varied situations, not merely in relation to success in reading and number. Awareness of differences should lead us to adapt our methods of teaching to meet the varying needs of our children.

2. *To Emphasize the Importance of the Home Background in the Emotional, Social, and Educational Development of the Child.* The home is the greatest influence in the development of the young child, and we cannot fully understand the child unless we know about and understand his home background, and help him to adapt himself to the changes that are bound to take place as time passes. Record cards, kept over a period of years, will help to give us this constantly changing picture of the home with its vital emotional links, conflicts and tensions,

which are part of the pattern of family life. Births, deaths, illnesses and varying levels of material prosperity are reflected in the child's attitudes towards school and his companions, and these attitudes can often be understood only in the light of our knowledge of the home. As teachers, we are not usually in a position to change existing home circumstances, but we should be able to modify the school environment so that the child may be able to compensate for adverse conditions, and find people who will provide him with love and security which he may lack at home.

Parents of young children frequently ask for help in handling their children. Few parents have any real knowledge of child development, and teachers, with care and discretion, can do valuable work in helping parents to follow their children's progress and to understand their difficulties and problems.

Record cards can help the teacher when discussing a particular child with his parents. With her experiences of many children of the same age, she will be able in most cases to give reassurance about his progress. Where attainment in formal work is limited, owing to low intelligence or poor adjustment, the evidence dating from the child's first year at school will help the teacher to explain why postponement of formal work may be desirable.

Fortunately, at the Infant School stage, there is usually close contact between the home and the school, the teacher learns a great deal about the child's interests and activities at home from her conversations with the child in class and from talks with the mother and father. This close relationship between parent and teacher, which is especially good in nursery schools and classes, should be encouraged and extended at every stage in the child's school life, through Parent-Teacher Associations and informal meetings of parents and teachers.

3. *To Build Up an Increasingly Detailed Picture of the Child, which will help Teachers to Select Suitable Methods of Teaching, and Ensure Continuity of Treatment.* All reliable information gathered from the child, his parents, from social workers, the school nurse or doctor, the psychologist, the attendance officer or from other responsible people, which helps towards a

better understanding of the child, should be recorded so that other teachers may have the advantage of such information when the child goes to another class or school. Continuity of methods and treatment help the child to adjust himself to new surroundings and to a new teacher. The feeling of security which results when the child is treated as an individual by a sympathetic and understanding teacher who is fully informed, is of the greatest value, particularly in the early formative years. It is obviously most uneconomical for each teacher to have to gather information concerning preceding years for herself, but if she is provided with a full record of past absences, illnesses, or physical defects, and of past school or home difficulties, she is better able to understand his problems and plan activities which will enable the child to work to his full capacity.

4. *To Provide Evidence of the Child's Interests and Abilities from the Earliest Stages with Objective Observations over a Long Period.* The interests of the young child are frequently changing. He is constantly testing and developing his powers and, through the encouragement and satisfaction he derives from success, he develops and extends his interests and activities. At the Infant stage, it would not be wise to expect record cards to predict the child's future performance, because the child may, at this stage, have certain untried special abilities which have not yet been stimulated or developed.

As Dr. C. M. Fleming observes—

"Pupils do not stay put. The process of learning seems dependent not merely on initial performances, and past experiences, but on present attitudes, interests, needs and social relationships, as well as on future expectations."¹

A cumulative record, covering a period of three or four years, and containing observations and assessments made by different teachers should, however, provide a most useful guide which will facilitate the placing of children on transfer to a Junior School.

Above all, the record card in the Infant School should help us to recognize the child's needs as an individual, and help us to provide him with an educational climate best suited to those needs.

¹ *Cumulative Records*, University of London Press.

Main Requirements of Record Cards

Record cards should be planned so that details which help to build up an accurate picture of the child are readily available and easily interpreted. It is not proposed to put forward a pattern of a record card to be rigidly followed. The suggestions made aim at providing a basis for discussion and experiment and it will be for Head Teachers, in collaboration with their staffs, to decide upon the form which record cards in any particular school shall take. The form decided upon must serve the needs of the children in the area and will have to meet the requirements of the local Education Authority. Some teachers will, no doubt, be familiar with existing record cards which could be adapted to meet the following requirements.

Records must be systematic, cumulative, objective and confidential. They must be easy to complete, easy to interpret and convenient to store.

1. *Systematic Records.* The details collected on Record Cards describe the child as a developing individual and for this reason records must be kept systematically and entries made regularly. Records are usually made up at yearly intervals, but we may find that there is greater value in the Infant School, at a period when the child is developing rapidly, in records completed every six months. Notes of unusual developments, or circumstances affecting, or likely to affect, the child should be entered at once, and dated and initialled by the class teacher. A severe illness or accident, the breaking up of family life through death or separation of parents, the birth of a brother or sister, are occurrences, the importance of which may be realized only in the light of the child's later reactions or behaviour. The teacher can sometimes avoid causing a new child added distress if she is aware of difficulties in the child's past experience. Records can also help the newly appointed teacher to get to know the children in the class more quickly.

While the value of systematic records to a single school would be difficult to over-estimate, no record card scheme can be satisfactory unless all schools in an area are co-operating to the full. The experiences of a child in infancy

have a very profound effect upon his later development, so that early records often provide the basis for diagnosis and treatment in cases of difficulty, which may not arise until the adolescent stage. This brings us to consider the value of cumulative records.

2. *Cumulative Records.* In a cumulative record, observations are made by different people over a period of years. Records, to achieve their full value, must be cumulative, and there are very great advantages in records which start in the nursery years. Much backwardness in reading and number could be avoided if sufficient attention were paid to the child's early development. A backward child is so often the child who has been rushed. A study of his free play, of the development of his manipulative powers, of the nature and scope of his interests, of his persistence, his attitude towards success or failure, and a study of his language development should help us to find out whether the child is yet ready for formal work in reading or number, and will give us the key to the methods we adopt in teaching these skills. If we take care that our observations are as objective as possible, we shall have a collection of useful information about the child which will enable his teacher to understand his difficulties and to help him by individual teaching, if he has failed to grasp essential points earlier on.

3. *Objective Records.* Objectivity is an important requirement in keeping record cards. To attempt to make objective observations is to take on a difficult task because all our observations are invariably coloured by our own prejudices and attitudes, and it is extremely difficult to divorce these from facts when making independent assessments. Teachers and parents are inevitably involved emotionally with the children they are observing. We tend, naturally, to praise those qualities we admire and to condemn in others traits which we dislike in ourselves or envy in others. Our attitudes are influenced by many factors and it is sufficient to say that, because of this, where possible, facts rather than opinions should be recorded. Teachers are often prejudiced against a dirty, badly behaved child, and will tend to assess him below his fellows who, although clean and docile, may not, in fact, be superior in character

and intelligence. A dull child, with intelligent brothers and sisters in the same school, may be wrongly assessed, told that he is lazy and made to feel inferior because his teachers have been unable to rid themselves of an impression built up from observation of other members of his family. Teachers also may be influenced by what they hear of children from staff room conversation. It is not suggested that there should be no discussion of children in the staff room, but it is relevant to draw attention to the possibility of teachers being influenced by hasty and ill-considered judgments. It is important that the class teacher should be aware of her own emotional attitudes towards the children in her charge, and also of the attitudes of other members of the staff to these children. She should understand that emotional responses vary with each individual in the interaction of personalities in human relationships, and in coming to such an understanding, she will realize more fully the importance of making her recording as objective and factual as possible.

4. *Confidential Records.* Teachers must feel free to write frankly, without fear that the records may fall into the hands of persons likely to misinterpret their observations. For this reason, the number of people to whom the cards are available should be limited. The main use of the cards will obviously be in the school and they should be readily available to the teaching staff at all times. In this connection, it has sometimes been argued that record cards should not be available to a teacher until the time comes for her to fill in her own observations; the object of this procedure is to ensure that the present observer is in no way influenced by the assessments of the previous teacher. In our view, such a procedure cannot be justified. Record cards, as we have shown above, are tools, designed to aid the teacher who will frequently need to refer to them; if record cards are locked away in the Head Teacher's room, except for a few days each year, they become records for records' sake, and have little value. We should like, at this point, to stress the importance of close co-operation between teachers and other specialists, the school doctor and nurse, the advisory officers and organizers and the psychologist, all of whom are engaged

with the teacher in the work of promoting the greatest well-being of the child. Informal meetings between staff and visitors help to foster a feeling of common purpose. Such meetings also give opportunities for discussion of individual difficulties which may need specialist advice. A summary of treatment suggested should be entered on the record card clearly and in everyday language, so that recommendations may be put into practice by the class teacher.

It will be appreciated that record cards used in this way may pass through several hands. At the same time, it must be clearly understood that those people to whom they are available are responsible for ensuring that all recorded information is treated as strictly confidential.

Material to be Recorded

We come now to discuss the construction of the record card and to decide which facts concerning the child's development and home background should be recorded.

Health and Attendance

The Medical Officer's report is an important item which will enable the teacher to help the child in school. Cases of defect in sight and hearing, if neglected in these early stages, may become a serious handicap to the child. In some areas height and weight cards are kept by the teachers, and may be attached to the record card as additional evidence of the child's physical development. Long absences should be recorded. Young children may have a series of infectious diseases, and may not only miss vital stages in the preparatory work in reading and number, but may also have difficulty in re-adjusting themselves to the school group. Some children become over-anxious about missing school, but a wise teacher can plan individual work so that they do not become worried and frustrated in their efforts to catch up with their school fellows.

Frequent short absences can be very unsettling for small children. The child in the Infant School is a creature of routine and easily becomes restless and insecure in an unorganized

or emotionally disturbed group. If a child is kept at home to do the shopping or to look after still younger brothers and sisters, behaviour difficulties often arise in school. A child may be anxious about his family problems without being consciously aware of the cause of his restlessness and, in such cases, a good school will help by providing a stable environment to ease his emotional tension.

Home Conditions

The emotional atmosphere of the home is an important factor in the child's development. A child from a slum area who comes to school unwashed and unfed may feel more secure and have more affection from his family than a child who comes from a home where material conditions are good. Friction between parents, jealousy or anxiety in any home are likely to have a more lasting effect on the child than bad physical conditions alone, but it is not always easy for the teacher to know whether the child is happy in his home and frequently we find that the shy, silent child is the most disturbed and the most difficult to help.

Inadequate sleep is often the cause of listlessness and apathy in school. There may be children in every class of the Infant School, and particularly in the five-year-old classes, who would benefit from sleep in the afternoon. The school day is a long one for the small child, and if he sleeps in an overcrowded room and goes to bed late at night, he will not be alert and responsive in school. Teachers would be able to help their children to develop more fully if more attention were paid to this aspect of the child's physical condition. Other details about the child's home conditions may help the teacher to reach a better understanding of the child. For example, the child's position in the family, mother's illness, the arrival of a new baby, the parents' attitude to the child and to the school, the amount of pocket money and play facilities in the home and neighbourhood.

Special abilities may not be very marked before the child leaves the Infant School, but outstanding qualities or special interests in art or music, in dramatic or physical activities, should be noted.

Special difficulties may include physical, emotional or educational defects or maladjustments. Notes on remedial treatment attempted should be as detailed as possible, and it may be useful in certain cases to attach examples of the child's work to the record card.

Standardized Procedure: Objective Tests

Most teachers are familiar with standardized tests of attainment and intelligence. By means of these tests, we are able to compare the performance of pupils not only with that of others in the same school, but also with the performance of the average child of the same age in the country as a whole. Standardized tests are objective, and avoid errors of judgment arising out of a test put together by the Head or class teacher and given to only a small number of children. It is comparatively easy to assess attainment and ability at the Junior or Secondary School level by means of standardized tests, but at the Nursery or Infant level assessments of ability and attainment, as well as assessments of personal qualities, have to be based mainly upon teachers' estimates.

Attainment Tests

Formal testing of attainment in reading, writing and number should not be attempted before the age of six and a half. Up to this age, the child is developing physical and manipulative skills. Undue concentration on formal lessons in number and reading limits the child's activity, and too often children lose interest because they are not ready to think in terms of abstract symbols. Children need many varied experiences of number and language before formal work in number and reading has any real interest or meaning. Results of Arithmetic Attainment tests show the effects of direct teaching more clearly than the results of reading tests. Probably significant assessments of attainment in number will not be achieved before the child is eight or more. We need tests of attainment which are more closely related to the freer methods now used in most Infant Schools. Recent American Word Recognition

Tests may prove to be useful measures of attainment in the first stages of the reading process, but at the moment, we suggest that attainment tests should not be given until the child reaches the final year in the Infant School.

Intelligence Tests

Some teachers have in the past objected to the use of intelligence tests in Infant Schools but there can now be little doubt that such tests are of value, provided that complete reliance is not placed on the results obtained. It is clear that in a cumulative record, kept throughout the child's school life, an objective estimate of intelligence should be made as soon as possible. We are able to see the child's development more clearly when we compare later test results with results of tests given at the Infant stage.

Tests of Intelligence may be individual or group tests. Individual tests of intelligence at the Infant, as at any other stage, are the most reliable, but for individual tests, special training in administration and interpretation is necessary. For general use in school, group tests will give a fairly accurate assessment of the child's intellectual ability.

When selecting group tests for young children, the following points should be considered.

1. *The Length of the Test.* The span of attention of young children is short; the author of a good test will have made provision for breaks and will have ensured that the test takes no longer than is necessary to obtain a reliable assessment.

2. *Administration and Marking.* Tests should be easy to administer. Clear, brief instructions to the children should be followed by interesting practice items to make certain that each child knows what to do. The answers to each item should be unambiguous and the marker should not have to decide whether or not an answer is right.

3. *Test Material.* For young children, the test material should be entirely in picture form, so that no child is handicapped by lack of verbal ability. Pictures should be boldly drawn, the subject matter should be familiar and should be well spaced in the test booklet.

4. *Standardization.* A good test should be standardized; that is, tried out on a large number of children of the age for which it is intended. It should be valid; that is, it should test what it is intended to test, intelligence. It should be reliable; in other words, it should give a similar result if used again on the same group of children.

The instructions provided with any test must be followed exactly. No changes in presentation or timing are permissible under any circumstances, since, if changes are made, the test result will not be valid.

However well standardized a test may be, and however conscientious a teacher may be in administering it, the resulting estimate of intelligence is not to be regarded as final. Rather should the estimate of ability be regarded as a useful addition to the knowledge the teacher already has concerning the child. Too many factors operate in the testing situation for us to regard group tests as infallible, but they are valuable in that they give us a fairly accurate assessment of the child's intelligence at the time the test is given.

Standardized Procedure: Teachers' Estimates

We now come to those sections of the card in which teachers are asked to make their own estimates. On the suggested card, teachers are asked to record their estimates and observations under the following headings—

1. Intelligence.
2. Personal qualities.
3. Language development.
4. Play activities.

The Five-point Scale

The most satisfactory method of recording assessments of personal development is by the use of the five-point scale, controlled by verbal definitions of each grade in the scale. By using this method, qualities are assessed for each child as if he were one of an unselected group of a hundred pupils. This may be more easily understood if we refer to a normal distribution curve.

The normal distribution curve shown in Fig. 1. will be obtained if we arrange in rank order a

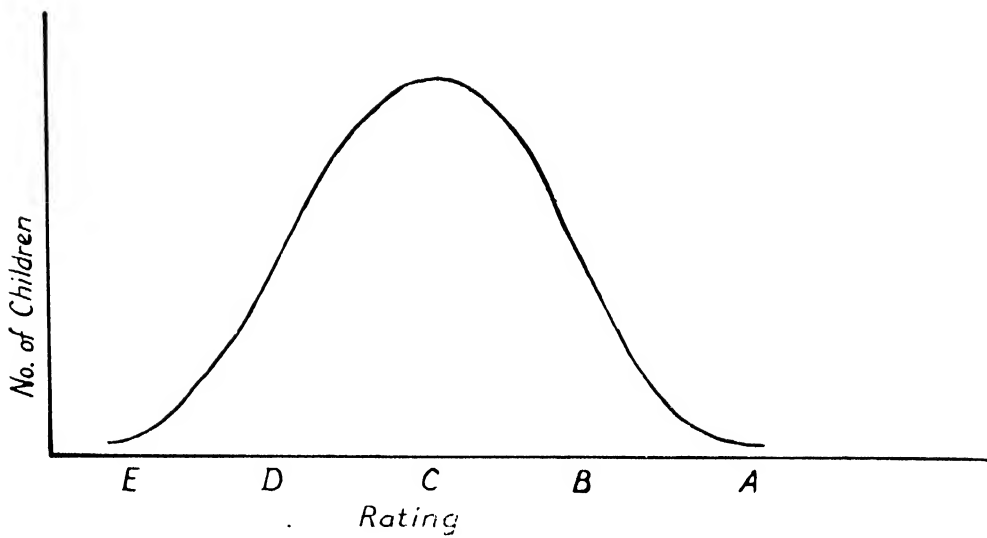


FIG. 1
*Distribution Curve from Results of Testing
 a Group of Unselected Children*

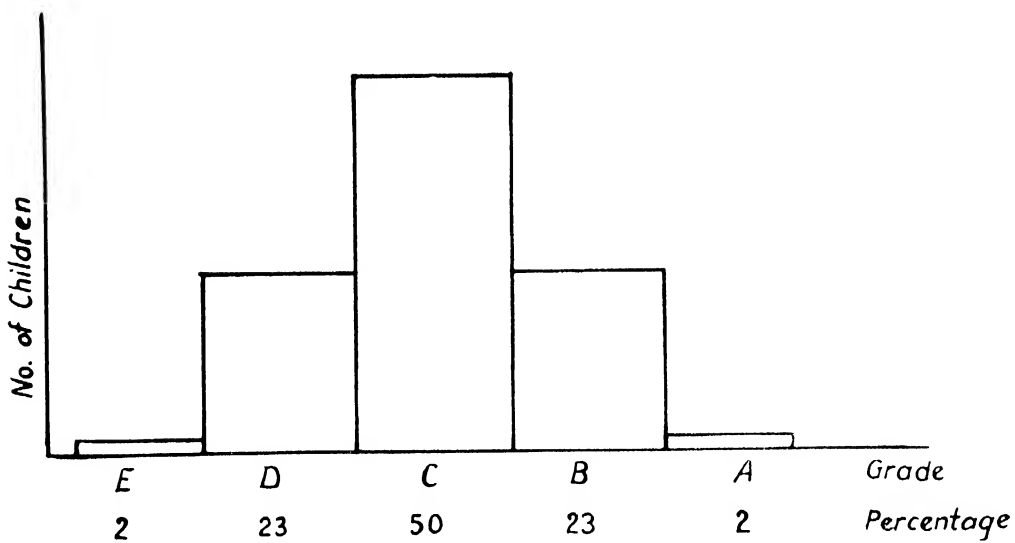


FIG. 2
Block Diagram based on Same Results as Fig. 1

large number of unselected children for height, weight, intelligence or for any other attribute at any particular age. The group must be large and unselected if a perfect curve is to be obtained, that is, it must contain the tallest and the shortest if we are drawing a curve for height, and the brightest and dullest if we are dealing with intelligence. It will be seen from the curve that a very small proportion of children are outstandingly tall or particularly short; of outstanding intelligence or of extreme dullness. One half of the number ranked is in the average group, *C*, one quarter is in the superior groups *A* and *B*, and one quarter is in the inferior *D* and *E* groups. Roughly the same distribution is obtained if we are dealing with small numbers. In Fig. 2 the grades are shown separated into "blocks" in order to demonstrate more clearly the relative sizes of the grades. The percentage distribution, that is to say, the number of children in each grade, to be found in an unselected group of 100 children, will be as follows.

Little difficulty will be experienced in assessing a child's performance in number on the five-point scale. An *A* will be understood to mean that his performance corresponds to that of the top two in every hundred pupils; a *B* represents a performance corresponding to the next 23 pupils in the hundred. A child will be given a *C* rating if his performance is equal to that of the average, and so on.

Rather more difficulty may be met with in assessing the child's individual development, but, as we have already stressed, an objective assessment is essential. A badly behaved child may be given a lower assessment on the scale than his performance warrants, while a child who does well in one activity may easily be given a higher grade than he merits for everything if we do not allow for and guard against the "halo effect."

It has been found that estimates tend to be more reliable when the teacher assesses one quality for the whole group of children before going on to assess for another quality. In this way, the teacher may ensure that the assessments of one quality or activity for each child relates to the assessment of the same quality in the rest of the group. Taking the percentages already shown in Fig. 2 as a guide, the teacher

should be careful to avoid undue generosity in assessment, remembering that only two per cent of the group may be expected to warrant grading as *A*, two per cent as *E*, and bearing in mind the percentages mentioned for the *B*, *C* and *D* grades. There is also the danger of bunching in the middle grade and teachers may be too chary of assessing children either as *A* or *E*. The whole scale should be used and if, when all the assessments are completed, the distribution of grades for each attribute resembles that shown in Fig. 2, the teacher may be reasonably certain that her assessments are correctly made. It is worth while reconsidering the assessments for the whole group before the grade is entered on the card.

The teacher will find that verbal definitions of each grade provide a useful guide in assessing attributes for the children especially if she has only a small group. It should be noted that an *A* grading does not necessarily indicate that the child is developing satisfactorily. An *A* grading should be given only when the child shows to a marked degree the quality or attribute being assessed, and it may be that for certain attributes an *A* grading is a sign of maladjustment needing special investigation and treatment. A complete set of descriptions for each section to be assessed would be attached to the record card suggested here. In the Record Card of the National Foundation for Educational Research the definitions are incorporated into the record card. Although the cards may appear to be made more complicated by the inclusion of this extra material, results tend to be more reliable and teachers will find that their assessments will be more objective if they have the definitions before them.

The tables on the following pages give definitions which have been worked out for each section of the suggested card.

We should like to draw special attention to the section which deals with observations of activities. We have included this section because many important developments are revealed through the child's undirected activities as well as through his progress in learning skills. When children are free to choose their own occupations, we are able to discover a great deal about their abilities and interests, about

PERSONAL QUALITIES

| | <i>E</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>A</i> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Self Confidence | Unusually diffident | Easily disturbed Needs much encouragement | Is usually sure of himself in familiar situations | Faces new situations with assurance | Extremely self-assured and independent |
| Sociability — with adults | Unresponsive to adults | Responds only to a few adults | Usually happy and responsive with most adults | Very responsive and friendly with adults | Exceptionally responsive with adults |
| Sociability — with children. | Never plays with other children. | Usually plays alone Sometimes plays with other children | Plays happily in a group but is content to play alone at times | Mixes readily with other children | Prefers to be with other children and is very popular in the group |
| Persistence | Gives up at the slightest difficulty | Soon discouraged by difficulties | Will usually make an effort to complete a task | Shows determination in completing tasks | Works doggedly in the face of difficulties |

INTELLIGENCE TEACHERS' ESTIMATES

| | <i>E</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>A</i> |
|------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|
| Interest and Curiosity | Shows little interest Rarely asks questions | Very few situations arouse interest Asks few questions | Is usually interested and alert Asks sensible questions when curiosity is aroused | Shows great interest and curiosity Asks many questions | Is intensely interested and curious about all around him Asks searching questions |
| Observation | Appears to take little notice of things around him | Notices little unless attention has been directed | Usually notices what is happening in immediate surroundings | Observations rarely need directing | Keenly observant Notices details |
| Comprehension | Does not understand instructions without help and demonstration | Understands simple instructions but easily becomes confused | Usually understands straightforward instructions | Is quick to understand and carry out instructions correctly | Very quick to follow complicated instructions |
| Reasoning | Needs assistance in understanding and solving the simplest problem | Has great difficulty in solving everyday problems without assistance | Can usually solve everyday problems | Is quick in finding solutions to most problems | Keen appreciation of problems which he solves logically and quickly. |

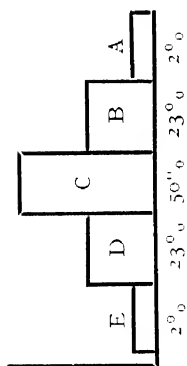
TEACHERS' ESTIMATES

| | <i>E</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>A</i> |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | Printed material has little or no meaning | Can read some words and phrases when accompanied by picture | Usually recognizes familiar words Reads and understands simple sentences | Reads with few errors. Retells accurately stories he has read | Reads with expression and complete understanding. |
| Number | Appears to have little number sense | Number sense poorly developed Needs concrete material to aid counting | Shows some ability in number Occasionally needs help of concrete material | Well developed number sense | Shows outstanding ability in number. |

OBSERVATIONS OF ACTIVITIES

| | <i>F</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>A</i> |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| General behaviour in school activities - Aggression and submission | Extremely submissive or quiet | Usually submissive. Only shows aggression after severe provocation | Usually co-operative, but becomes aggressive when provoked | Unco-operative and often hostile Restless and interfering | Very quarrelsome or destructive or noisy |
| Physical Activity | Marked lack of physical control. | Movements poorly co-ordinated. | When given encouragement and practice can master new skills fairly quickly | Good co-ordination Learns new skills quickly and easily | Delights in controlled activities Movements skillfully co-ordinated |
| Constructive Ability | Shows very little constructive ability Lacks skill in handling material. | Has difficulty in making things without assistance | Can usually construct simple objects only occasionally requiring help | Manipulates material skillfully | Shows marked constructive ability |
| Experimental and Inventive Ability | Makes little attempt to find new uses for material. | Will copy others Rarely works out original ideas | Will sometimes put material to original uses | Makes many experiments and produces original ideas | Shows outstanding ability in improvisation and invention. |
| Imagination | Does not take part in imaginative play | Can sometimes be persuaded to join in imaginative play | Enjoys imaginative play but does not take a leading part. | Is very imaginative | Highly imaginative Takes leading part in dramatic play. |

ASSESSMENTS



Teachers are asked to make assessments on a five-point scale, assuming that each child is one of an unselected group of 100 children. The graph shows the normally expected distribution of children in the five grades.

In each case the teacher should use the verbal descriptions supplied as a guide when making assessments.

| INTELLIGENCE | Test | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date |
|---------------------------|------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|
| Objective Tests | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Results | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TEACHERS' ESTIMATES | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Interest and Curiosity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Observation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Comprehension | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reasoning | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PERSONAL QUALITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self Confidence | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sociability — with Adults | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| with Children | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Persistence | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SPEECH — Content | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fluency | | | | | | | | | | | | |

ATTAINMENT IN BASIC SUBJECTS

(No Tests before 64)

| Objective Tests | Test | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date | Grade | Initial | Date |
|------------------------------------|------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|---------|------|
| General Behaviour | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression and Submissiveness | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Activity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Constructive Ability | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Experimental and Inventive Ability | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Imagination | | | | | | | | | | | | |

CONFIDENTIAL RECORD CARD (INFANT)

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------|---------------|---------------|
| SURNAME | HOME ADDRESS | SCHOOL | Date of Entry | Admission No. |
| CHRISTIAN NAMES | | | | |
| Date of Birth: | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------|---------|------|----------|---------|------|
| Physique and Health | Comments | Initial | Date | Comments | Initial | Date |
|---------------------|----------|---------|------|----------|---------|------|

(Medical Officer's Report)

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Attendance (Reasons for frequent or long absences) | | | |
|---|--|--|--|

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Home Conditions (Emotional atmosphere, material conditions, play space, sleep conditions, number and position in family) | | |
|---|--|--|

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Special Interests and Abilities | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Special Difficulties (Notes on Remedial Treatment) | | |
|---|--|--|

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

| | <i>E</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>A</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| Speech— Content | Vocabulary very limited | Short, simple sentences, poorly expressed | Can describe familiar objects and situations accurately | Wide vocabulary and good power of description | Uses complex sentences correctly to express well developed ideas |
| Speech— Fluency | Rarely speaks and has difficulty in expressing himself intelligibly | Speaks hesitantly but can usually be understood | Can usually express himself clearly in everyday situations | Expresses himself readily. Speaks clearly | Eager to express himself. Speaks very clearly, without any hesitation |

their reactions in different groups and their ability to express themselves in speech and writing, in art and imaginative play. It is, in fact, often impossible to distinguish between what is work and what is play in a child's activities. He may show outstanding power of concentration and invention in tasks he has chosen for himself, but he may be slow in learning to read. This may indicate that our methods of teaching him are unsuitable. On the other hand, a child may be hard-working and successful in number and reading, but in periods of undirected activity may show marked lack of initiative and imagination, and of constructive ability. We are concerned with the development of the whole child, and for this reason, we wish to emphasize the importance of observations of the child's undirected activities in attempting to assess his behaviour and personality.

All assessments should be based upon careful observations which will necessarily involve time and skill, but these observations should be regarded as an essential part of the work of the Infant School teacher, who should not only be convinced of the value of records, but should

also understand their limitations. Observations of individual development, which take account of every aspect of the child's growth, help us to arrive at a sympathetic understanding of the child, and help us to meet his needs more successfully. On the other hand, recorded observations can only tell part of the story, they never can give more than an indication of trends in development and assessments can never be completely objective and reliable. In spite of these limitations, we feel that the value of records cannot be disputed. The child passes from the Infant School to the Junior School and all that is learned about him is lost, unless a full record passes on with him.

Finally, we have a responsibility to the child, to ensure that each stage in his education is related to the one before, and to ensure that his education in the broadest sense is continuous. Cumulative records should, therefore, begin in the Infant School with observations of the child's early development and be carried on through the Junior and Secondary stages, thus providing a valuable contribution to educational guidance.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

IN the welter of modern opinion on politics, religion, and morality, many people are "deracinated," as Dean Inge says; "uprooted," "at loose ends." They do not love their daily work; they do not possess, in compensation for this dislike, personal hobbies, constructive or merely pleasurable, hobbies in which "work is play and play is life." They get no abiding satisfaction from their very pleasures, from the thrill of the football field or gambling event, from the cackle and twaddle of the variety entertainment or from mawkish cinema shows. Religion seems unreal, politics seem futile, and no controversy seems of any interest unless an element of hatred can be recognized or introduced.

Touching Reality in the Child

The citizen thus "deracinated" may, in fact, touch reality, touch solid earth, at only one point, namely, *parenthood*. Except that he or she has a child or children there would be no clear call of duty whatever, except, perhaps, the call of a vague good nature. Why should he work hard for his employer, for the state, or for the municipality? Why should he think, study, vote? Why, whether married or not, should he observe fantastic rules of purity or self-restraint? These questions admit of no logical answer; moral and civic conduct is determined either by habit or by "admiration, hope, and love"; not by logic.

But even the most disillusioned and cynical of parents may learn to see a certain *moral logic* in behaving well to his children and doing his duty by them. They are not his equals, his rivals, his enemies in a struggle for existence; they are weak, helpless, and dependent. None of the arguments usable against employers or against rulers or, maybe, against wife or husband, is usable against one's young offspring. They, at least, deserve to have their chance; they at least challenge one's chivalry.

The Education of the Parents

An unmarried man may gamble his wages away with no deeper feeling than annoyance and disappointment; but a parent who gambles away his children's food has other causes of regret. And the parent of an intelligent child has reasons not only for industry and moral conduct, but for self-improvement. He does not like the feeling of being distanced in knowledge by his boys or girls: their very existence is a motive for resuming his long-neglected education.

And with his feet once set firmly on the steps of parental duty he becomes conscious, as never before, of his ignorance of child nature and indeed of the whole world in which he lives. Babyhood, childhood, life itself, become mysterious, puzzling, challenging. What are we here for? What can we do?

The Parents' Meeting

In most schools Parents' Meetings were for many years either unknown or of rare occurrence. The commonest type of such meeting was the "Open Day"; but though this is undoubtedly useful, its avowed purpose is rather to help the school than to help the parents. By letting the parents see what is going on, by taking them, so to speak, into confidence, it is rightly judged that relations between school and home will become more sympathetic and the possibilities of friction be diminished. Parents will at least realize that the school is a happier place than it was in their own days.

"Exhibitions of school work," generally held in the evening, serve a similar purpose, and can be more frequently attended by male parents.

Some head teachers boldly went a stage further than this. They frankly addressed the assembled parents and solicited their co-operation in matters of cleanliness, punctuality, and the like. There is ample evidence that parents do not resent this.

Good Advice to the Parents

Good advice, of course, comes occasionally into conflict with ancient prejudices, and the cock-sureness of mothers is notorious. Nevertheless, good advice, if really grounded on knowledge and proffered with sympathy, sinks in and bears fruit. In some cases the fruit will only appear after many years, but unquestionably a persistent campaign to diffuse hygienic and civic knowledge to parents through the agency of the school would work wonders in the course of a single generation. Ancient prejudices would slowly die a natural death, and knowledge would take their place.

This is not to say that teachers should stand on a moral pedestal, or ascend an intellectual pulpit, to address the benighted parents. There are many things that well-paid teachers, living in far-away suburbs, do not know concerning the lives of the children they teach. They may think that punctuality at school is an easy matter, and cleanliness not very difficult: the reverse is the case whenever a poor family consists of more than two children. In fact, the task of a "mother of five" is often terrific. No pedestal or pulpit should, therefore, be ascended until the teacher has herself understood the difficulties that parents and especially mothers have to meet. And every scrap of advice or information should be open to discussion.

If these conditions are observed, the Parents' Meeting, whether held in the day or the evening, will be of the greatest value: and one of the

most needed steps in educational organization is for provision to be made for such meetings to be held several times a year.

In many schools throughout the country a "Parents' and Teachers' Union" has been formed and has proved very successful. Short addresses on educational subjects are given from time to time by competent people, and the safety valve of discussion is always in working order. In times of transition, as when the change to the secondary schools is being made, a Parents' Meeting, addressed by a competent and sympathetic educationist who is willing to answer questions patiently, is able to ease the situation.

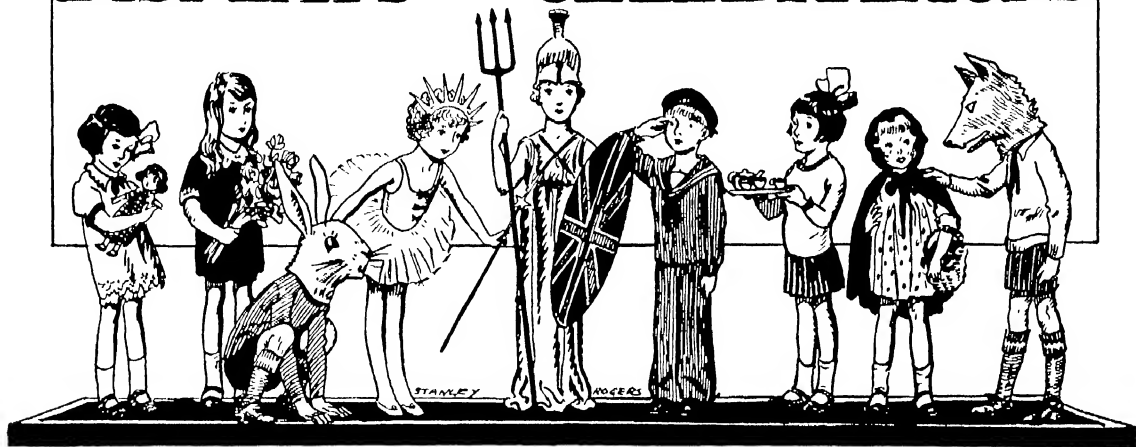
Teachers Will Benefit Too

And there is no denying the fact that teachers as well as parents would thus benefit. So long as human nature, or at any rate civilization, is what it is, teachers will look at children through teachers' spectacles, and will approach educational questions through the professional door. Holidays, for example, and cleanliness and home lessons will be thus regarded.

It is highly salutary to see ourselves as others see us, and the Parents' Meeting, by enabling teachers to hear the views of the parents of their pupils, will derive, as well as confer, benefit.

Ordinary school celebrations may well be thrown open to parents also, but in addition there may be given, once a year at least, a *Celebration of "The Child,"* designed for parents and teachers only. The outline of such a celebration follows.

DISPLAYS and CELEBRATIONS



THE AIM OF SCHOOL FESTIVITIES

“THE school,” it has been said, “is the conscious means used by society to give children rich and varied experiences in wholesome living, in the most economical way.”

While scholarship used to be, perhaps, the chief aim of the school, citizenship tends now to take its place. That is to say, it is what the child gives out, in the form of *conduct*, rather than what he takes in as *knowledge*, that is the main concern of the educator. Knowledge is not neglected, but subordinated.

Energy to think, and the will to carry thought into practice are two factors that have received increased consideration.

Such aims as these need a wisely adjusted curriculum.

Not only must stimulating subject-matter be studied, but it must be a kind that identifies the child with social situations. The school must be a social organization reaching out and touching that other life outside the school to which it is closely related at every point, and so making its own life richer and fuller.

The Need for Frequent Festivities

A valuable help in carrying out some of the above aims is the wise use of the recurring seasonal festivals and special-day celebrations. These special exercises (for they are as much a part of the school work as reading or writing lessons) may take the form of programmes of

music and poetry, pageants, plays, and the like, or they may be just little social functions at which the children act as hosts and hostesses.

Social Gatherings

The event may include a single form, or groups selected from several forms. Here, at these meetings, the children may meet all the teachers, and child and teacher come in contact with the life personality, and interests of other children and teachers; or the children meet and entertain their parents; or perhaps simply one form meets another.

In any case it is a meeting place where each one who takes part must bring his best—the best that his heart can give, the best that his hand can make, the fruits of his observations and studies.

Here at these gatherings the child plans, speaks, and acts for the pleasure and enlightenment of other people; he says or does something that he has reason to believe they will like to hear or see; he is expressing himself with reference to others whom he wishes to make happy.

Pleasure to Parent and Child

To be of value, these social functions should be frequent—both for the pleasure they give the parents, the purpose they give to school work, and their general value to the child. It

is the habit of meeting an audience (not necessarily very large), even from infant days, that gives power, skill, and self-possession.

The majority of children thus trained never experience that agony of self-consciousness which an audience means to those educated to self-repression instead of self-expression. Moreover, whatever puts the child into possession of himself and his material, and helps him to use both freely with understanding and taste for the pleasure of others, must make for the adaptability and power necessary to meet the varied conditions that the future is likely to lay on him.

Love of Pageantry

Moreover, it must be remembered that there is an innate desire in the heart of nearly every human being to do things in company with his fellows. Every race, even the savages, have their feasts, dances, and processions.

Some of our school functions must give opportunity for satisfying the child's love of pageantry and helping him to shape the product into beauty of form, of colour, and of movement. This naturally applies to children of every age.

Educational Value

It may be argued that frequent social func-

tions, like those suggested above, will interfere with the work of the school, tend to spoil children who are eager to speak and act, and mean a great deal of preparation on the part of the teacher. These arguments show a complete misunderstanding of the purposes of these functions, and a lack of knowledge of the way they should be carried out. The following points should be borne in mind--

1. All functions must be as simple as possible, without any atmosphere of excitement. More will be said about this in connection with the question of scenery and costume.

2. Most of the social functions will grow naturally out of the daily work of the school, or out of the interests of the children in some large absorbing outside question, as we shall show later on.

3. The children should have all the pleasure of planning and working up the function themselves. It must not be all done by the teacher for them. Examples of purposeful work that little ones can do will be given when discussing the different kinds of functions.

4. *Every* child must take part. The children should be encouraged to make preparations to do their part, whatever it may be, in an earnest sincere way. It is their duty as well as their pleasure. Thus encouraged, a form or group of children will work together for a common end (the pleasure of their parents or their school), without thought of self, absorbed perhaps, if they are acting a story, in the story and its presentation.

It is wise, if possible, to have no applause, certainly no curtain calls or anything that turns attention to personality or makes the children think they are doing anything extraordinary.

5. Such functions, then, rightly directed, will make for order and *courtesy*, and give opportunity for wholesome training in altruistic thinking and living.



VARIOUS KINDS OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

THE different kinds of social functions which may be frequently arranged in the infant school can, for convenience, be considered under the following headings—

1. Great racial festivals, such as Christmas, the Harvest Festival, etc.

2. Festivals in memory of some great movement in national life, or some great man—such as Commonwealth Day, or an historical birthday anniversary.

3. Entertainments planned by the children to amuse their parents—the acting or telling of stories; a school concert, etc., including plays, games, and music.

4. Open days, parents' days, and social functions directly connected with the routine work of the school (*See Celebrations*, page 272.)

5. Festivals proposed by the children in imitation of some grown-up festival they have seen, for example, a Kindergarten Flower Show, an Exhibition and Sale of Work (for charity), and other simple social functions.

We will take each of these in turn, and show how the little ones in the Infant School can take a part in them.

1. *Great Racial Festivals*

(a) The Harvest Festival—Thanksgiving—Nature's great climax.

(b) Christmas—the triumph of light over dark (page 277).

(c) Spring or Easter—the rebirth of the spirit (page 284).

These can be organized on a large scale if necessary, but the little ones will take part in them simply and naturally because of the many simple projects they have carried out themselves. We shall deal mainly with the simple doings of little ones, not with elaborate ceremonies.

What They Teach the Children

The value of these functions, however simply carried out, is great.

They make the children familiar with some of the best traditions of the past. They help the children to secure concrete imagery, and enable them to take the first steps towards a reverent appreciation of the past. They stimulate wholesome feeling, and give the children an opportunity to express emotion beautifully in march, dance, and song.

As the children grow older, a study of the history of these festivals and of the different ways of celebrating them, leads not only to a study of the lives and customs of other people, but gives us glimpses of their spiritual life and their hopes. A study of these festivals, however slight, teaches, as nothing else can, the continuity of history, the oneness of the race, the brotherhood of man.

Above all, as we have said before, they develop adequate motives for patient, careful work and stimulate the child's initiative, resourcefulness, and perseverance—three of the most valuable qualities with which to face life.

(a) *The Harvest Festival— Thanksgiving*

Thanksgiving can be celebrated in any class in the school. It is not too difficult an idea even for the babies. Its educational possibilities are a sufficient reason for urging its celebration in all forms. The custom of returning thanks for blessings received is a daily one, and very old.

The festivals, especially with the little ones, will grow out of the work in which they are engaged. A feeling of genuine gratitude on the part of the children for certain definite blessings or privileges is the object for which one must strive. It must not be a mechanical function imposed on the children by the teacher.

Teacher and children can talk together about what they have to be grateful for and how they can express their gratitude. Then, out of the many possible forms of expressing that feeling in a suitable way, the children, working together with the teacher, suggest what should be done and how it should be done.

What the Tinies Can Do

The celebration may assume so many different forms that only a few points can be touched on

1. They can invite their parents to a room made gay with autumn leaves and berries, and arrange a simple little Thanksgiving feast—composed of Nature's gifts.

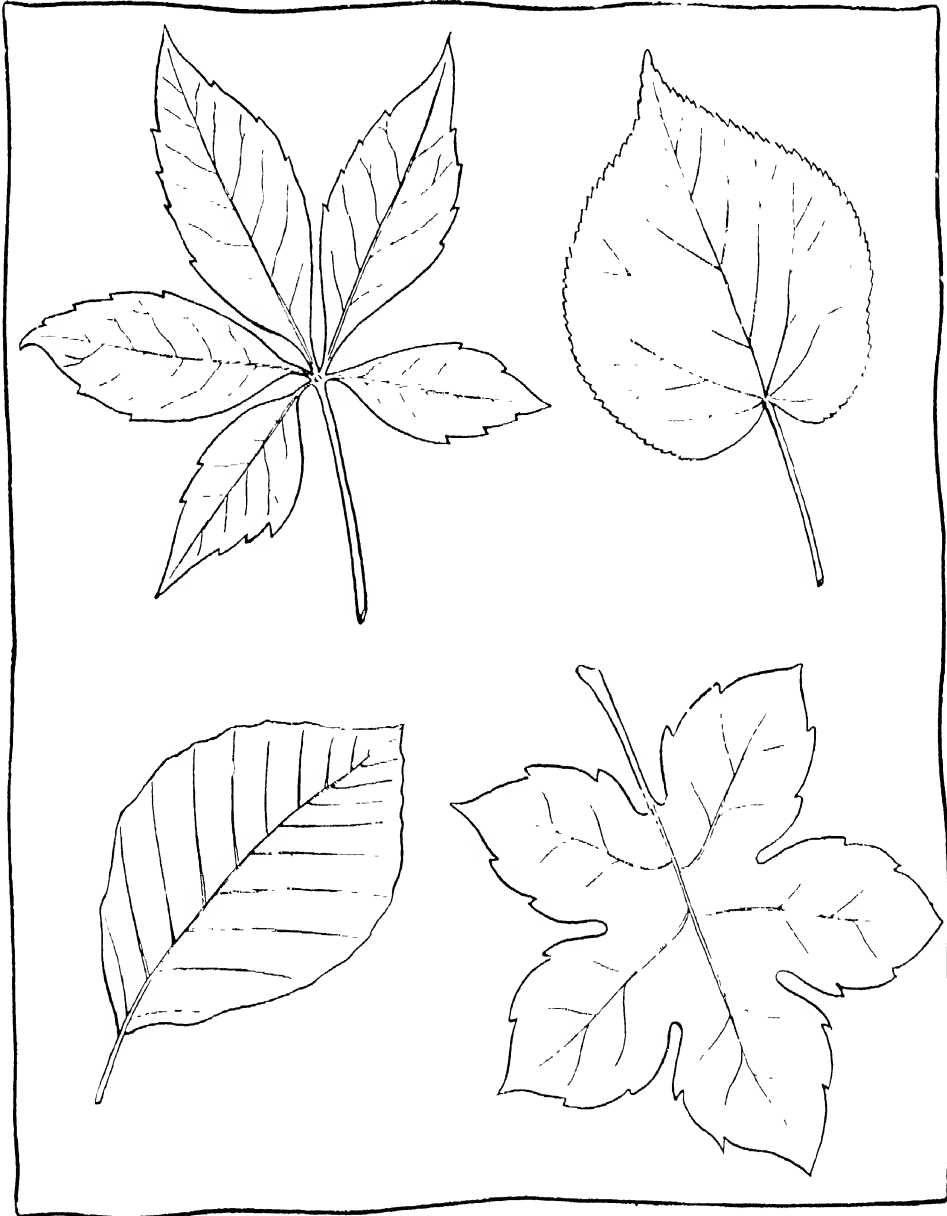


FIG. 1

Leaf Shapes for Harvest Festival Invitations

here. Quite naturally the babies, and the children of five will want to say "thank you" to their parents. They can do this in many different ways—

2. They can arrange the tables, make pretty paper dishes to hold a nut or two, or an apple, and make everything bright and gay. Then, before parents and children sit around the

dainty tables, the babies can say or sing some simple words of thanks, such as—

Thank thee, for the world so sweet,
Thank thee, for the food we eat,
Thank thee, for the birds that sing
Thank thee, God, for everything!

The Transition Class

The children in the Transition Class may wish to entertain their parents in some more elaborate

arranging the table for a harvest festival, and many other industrial and play activities.

The teacher must help the children to put their natural expression into a form which will be intelligible to the audience, and arrange the scenes and bind them all into a related whole. This is beyond the little child. But the teacher should not act out any part for the child to imitate exactly—she must, instead, keep before his mind that his action must tell the story to the person who does not know it.

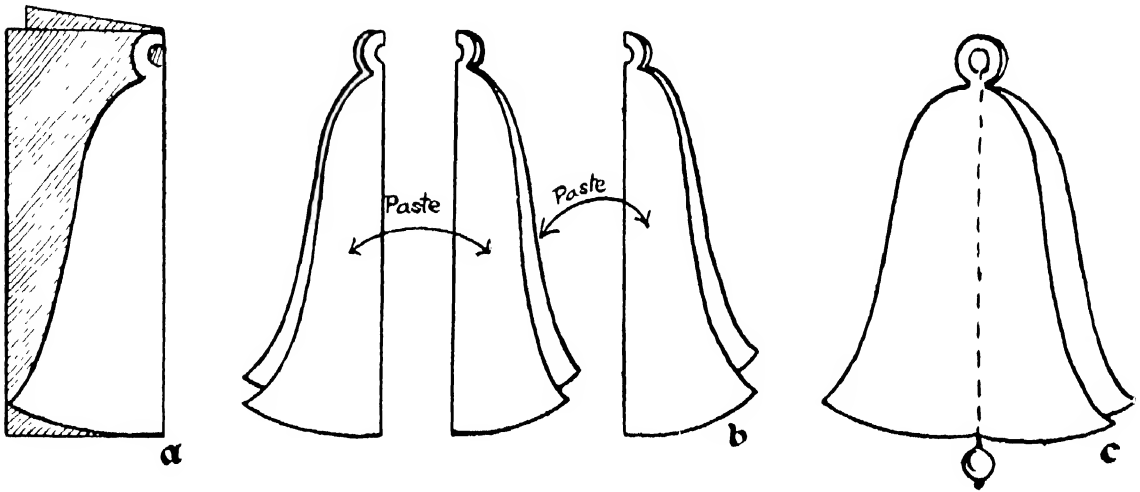


FIG. 2

How to Cut a Paper Bell

(a) Fold three squares of paper and cut out the bell shape. (b) Paste as shown (c) Finished bell with bead clapper

way. Their method of dramatic work is very different from that used by older children; even Kindergarten children of the same age vary greatly as to their dramatic ability.

Pantomime, with or without music, or pantomime with some dialogue, is a suitable form of expression for the Transition (children six to seven); or perhaps a rhythmic group representing Autumn, or Harvest.

No one form of representation should be insisted on in the primary forms. Nor should over-acted pantomime be expected. The chief aim is to have freedom in action and vivid portrayal. Perfect naturalness on the part of the children will give charm to all they do. They can represent people at work—"gathering nuts, picking apples, bringing home the grain,"

Include Some Music

As a rule pantomime needs to be accompanied by music to hold the parts together.

Music will please the little ones, and add impressiveness to what they do

Probably the most satisfactory Thanksgiving celebration for the lower forms, when the Kindergarten, Transition, and Form I have to combine, is one that includes pantomime, speech, march, dance, poem, and song. (See the Sections headed *Poetry, Music, Rhythmic Work, etc.*, for suggestions.)

Something that Has Been Done

In one school, the Transition Form planned to show their parents some of the things we

should be thankful for, and to whom we should say "thank you."

One child showed an apple, told the story of the apple, then told to whom we should say "thank you" for the apple; another child showed a picture of a wheat field, some flour, a little loaf of bread, told the story of bread, and then told to whom we should say "thank you"

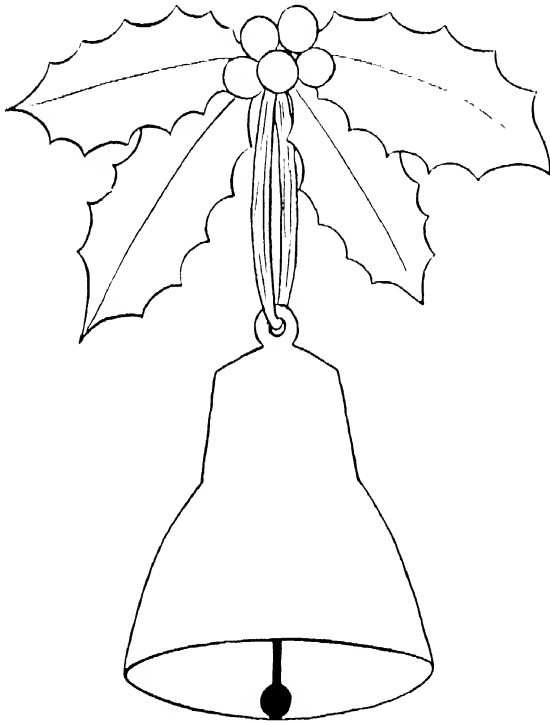


FIG. 3

Bell cut out of Folded Paper

The base is drawn in, and the bell hung on raffia pasted to paper holly leaves and berries, or tied to a sprig of real holly

for the bread. Other children showed butter, a piece of coal, etc., etc.

At the end of this exercise, the parents were taken to a little feast prepared in every detail by the children, so that the children could say "thank you" to their parents.

Preparing the Invitations

For this function, and for all the other functions described, the children should be allowed to write their own invitations to their parents, or to the form they are going to entertain, as the

case may be. The writing of the invitation will form part of the English lesson and writing lesson. Some eager little ones will write as many as four invitations in their efforts to produce a really good one, and carefully learn to spell all the words.

Those who find great difficulty in writing an invitation which they think good enough, can be given an opportunity to decorate those written by others, so that each one has a share in this part of the function. In the handwork lesson, envelopes can be made to fit the invitations.

Cutting Out Leaf Shapes

It gives little ones special pleasure to cut the paper on which the invitation is written into some special shape appropriate to the festival—for example, pink, and yellow paper cut in the shape of autumn leaves; or better still, white paper cut, then written on and chalked. In the school garden, or park, are hundreds of leaves for little ones to draw round so that they get good shapes, and plenty of variety. For every leaf is slightly different from its fellow. Some children may like to cut their paper to represent an acorn, or a nut of some kind, a pear, or an apple, etc. Fig. 1 shows some pretty leaves of well-known creepers and trees. Little ones can draw around shapes like these and colour them to decorate their form room, if they cannot get real leaves. And sewn together, they will make pretty chains for decorating the room or table.

(b) A Christmas Festival

The Christmas festival will furnish the motive for most of the handwork during the latter half of the autumn term. The interest of the children is intensified because the articles made are either used in decoration to give the classroom a festive look, or given as a present to some one they love or some one who needs to be cheered.

A simple little party to which they invite their parents will please the younger children. This will involve—

(a) Writing invitations and making Christmas cards

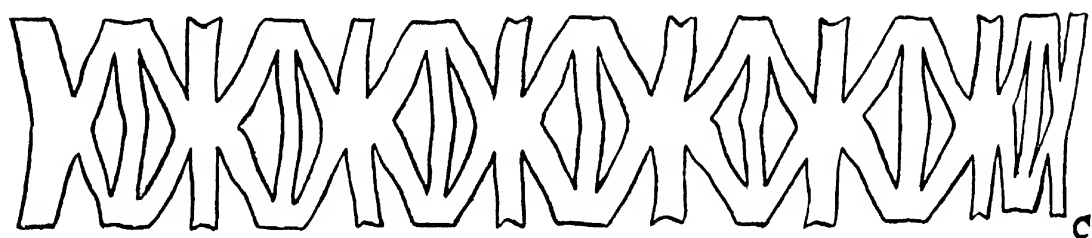
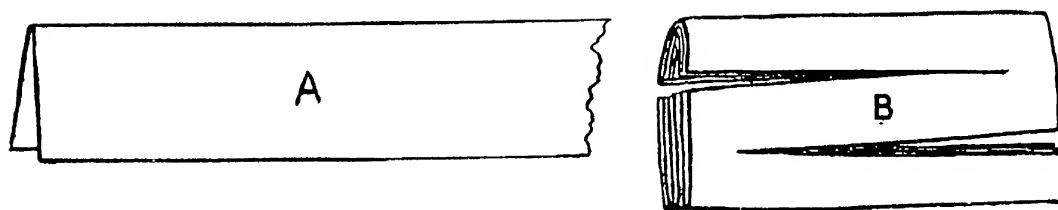


FIG 4

A Paper Festoon

Fold a long strip of paper 2 in or 3 in wide, lengthwise (A) Fold in half the other way, and fold again and again (B). Make two cuts, then pull open (C).

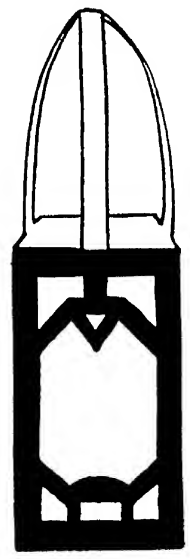
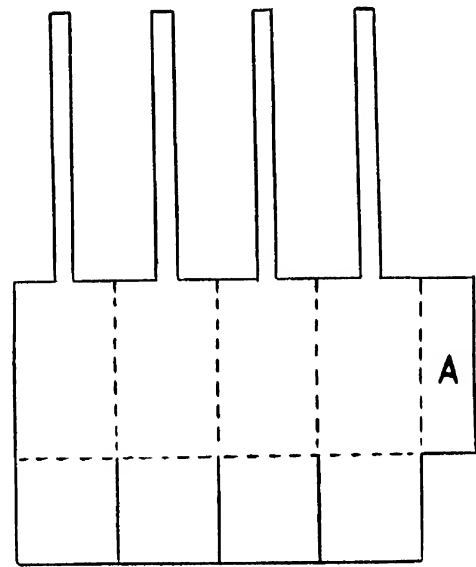
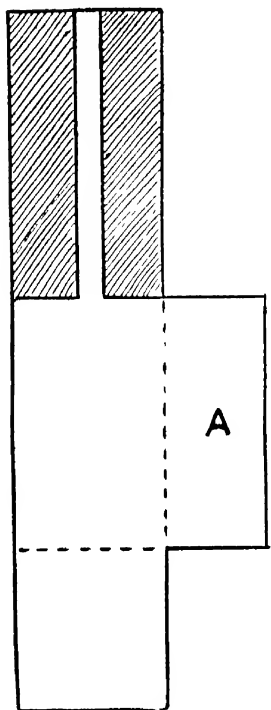


FIG. 5

The Lantern

Fold a long strip of paper into four equal parts. Leave portion A for joining. Cut as shown, paste and fasten on handles with paper fasteners, or cord.

- (b) Planning decorations.
- (c) Planning simple presents for a Christmas tree
- (d) Learning, perhaps, some stories to tell or act.

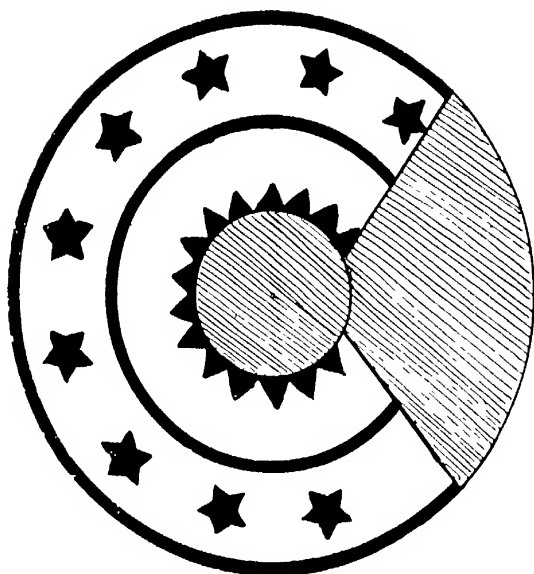


FIG. 6

To Make a Lamp Shade

Use paper of contrasting colours and cut two circles of similar size. Fold one piece into 8-fold and cut out pattern. Then unfold, cut both circles as shown, and paste cut ends together.

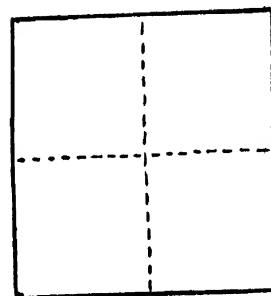
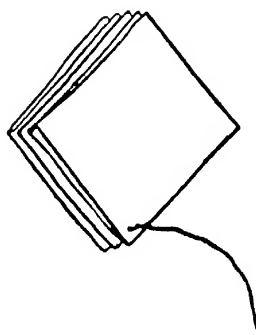
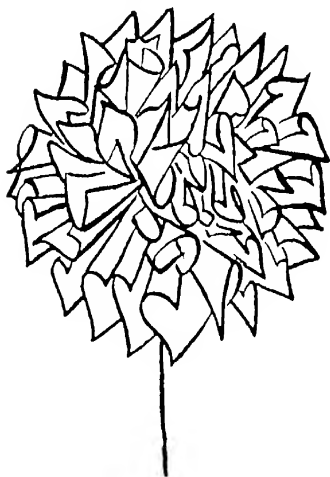


FIG. 7

A Paper Ball

Cut coloured tissue paper into 4-in. squares. Fold each piece in four, and thread them one by one at the point on needle and thread. String about 18 pieces and tie tightly. Then open up the folded pieces to make a pretty shaggy ball. A snowball is made in the same way, using circles of white tissue paper.

The Right Setting

The writing of invitations has already been dealt with. In planning the decorations, the symbolism of the different forms suggested by teacher or children should, as far as possible, not be lost sight of. The most joyous season of the year must have a meaningful setting. The children will propose bells, symbols of joy. Various ways of cutting, or making these from paper, are shown in Figs. 2 and 3.

Evergreens and holly and mistletoe from the woods will still further symbolize the season. One wants to avoid tawdry paper decoration if possible. But in town, where evergreens are difficult to get, paper festoons, lanterns, and lamp shades may be made by the children (Figs. 4, 5 and 6).

Large pictures drawn on the blackboards, or on large sheets of brown paper, will interest both parents and children, and still further enhance the setting.

One picture may be a winter night landscape, the dark blue sky dotted with stars, snow everywhere, and just a church and a few village houses in the distance among the fir trees. There may be, too, a radiant golden crescent moon. It will delight the children if strips of brown paper are pasted across the picture to represent the bars of a window, and they can

imagine they are looking out on a cold winter day.

A Simple Drawing or Cut-out

In Fig. 8, a simple drawing that may be chalked on the blackboard to make it look gay,

windows, etc. , green chalk lines the shutters ; red chalk the bricks of the chimney, and so on. Little ones can make Christmas cards like this for their parents, as well as helping with the big posters

Around the room should be hung pictures of



FIG 8

A Simple Christmas Drawing

is shown , it also looks effective chalked on grey paper . Cut out of coloured paper and mounted, it makes a good poster for class room decoration. The following colours are suggested : dark blue paper for the background (the sky), grey paper for the house and chimney, white paper for snow, and white, or gold, or silver paper for stars . Black chalk lines show the beams of wood that form the house, roof,

Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem, the little child in the stable, the three Kings and the shepherds, Jesus in the carpenter's shop, and other pictures of Christ's childhood. These are pictures the little ones can talk to their parents about

Table Decorations

The table decorations should be planned and

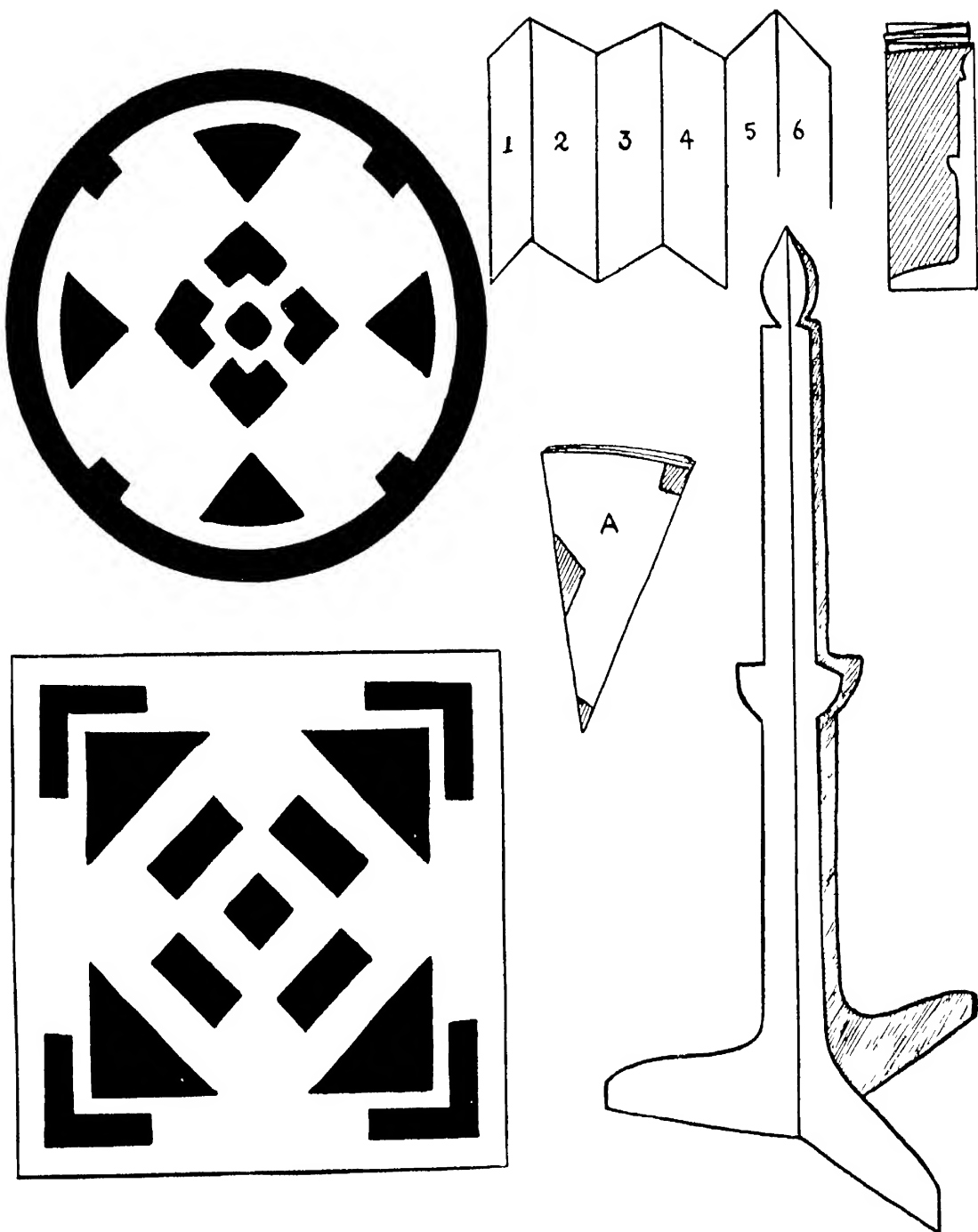


FIG 9

Paper Mats and Candle-stick

Fold and cut paper as A to make mat, open and paste over paper of contrasting colour
To make candle-stick, fold paper into six parts as shown, draw candle and candle-stick at folded edges
and cut out Paste together as for bell and colour

carried out by the children—paper mats and dishes may be made, and pretty paper candle-sticks. Among the many beautiful legends associated with Christmas, none perhaps is more

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree will contain gifts made by the children for their parents. We must be

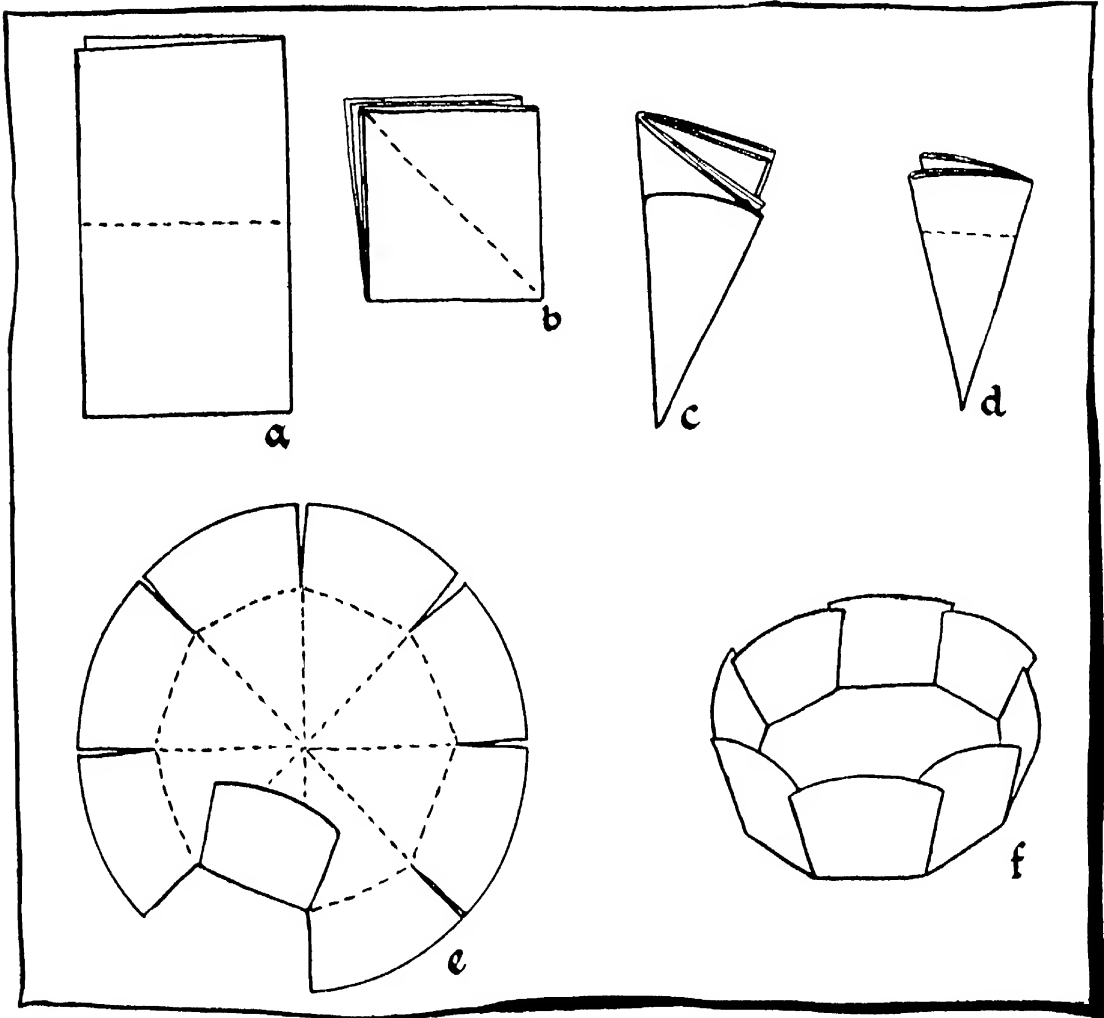


FIG 10

Paper Dishes

Fold in four (a) and fold again (b). Cut as shown (c). Draw a line 1 in from edge (d) and cut down creases to this line. Unfold, and turn back each section as far as the cuts permit (e). Tie or paste edges together to keep in place (f).

symbolic of the true spirit, "Least of these, my brethren," than that of the lighted candle, so we let our little ones make candle-sticks that they can enjoy this legend, and each put his candle in its place on the table as a symbol of his willingness to help all in need as far as he is able

very careful not to rob the tree of its beautiful significance. However simple our Christmas entertainment is, it must have meaning behind it. The tree of bazaars and fancy fairs with its loads of toys to be sold, is about as unlike a real Christmas tree as it can be. The very

essence of the symbolism is that the pretty things on the tree are a gift, not a purchase

If possible, we should have beneath the tree a little model of the manger, and at the top a Christmas angel. So the children perhaps will learn from this beautiful object lesson that the Christmas tree is the tree of Life, rising over the cradle where lay the Babe of Bethlehem, and that all things bright and precious are the gifts of the Holy Child.

Christmas stories that little ones can tell or act may be told by the teacher. If possible, the older children (the seven or eight year old

Martin teaches Ludwig the sayings the Prince had loved

Prince Saxon now king—about to go a long journey across the sea. His people come to say good-bye and offer gifts—Martin is too poor to go, but sends little Ludwig.

Little Ludwig's journey. Brings present for the king—a bright little tin mug bought for a few pence—inside, on a piece of paper, "To the King with my love, from Ludwig."

The Palace Lords and ladies offering gifts. Little Ludwig not noticed. His gift taken by a servant and tossed among the rest. The King calls for a cup to drink the health of his people.

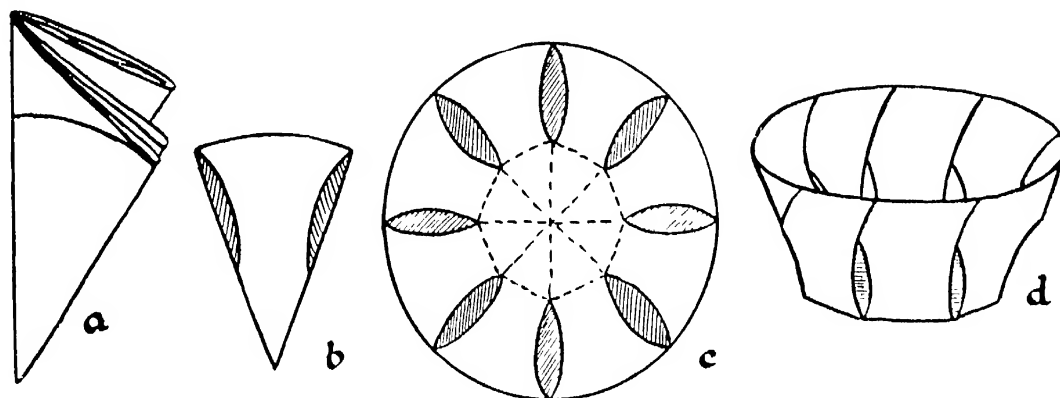


FIG 11

Paper Fruit Bowl

(a) Fold and cut as above (b) Cut along curved lines (c) Turn each division up (d) Allow the different parts to overlap and paste

ones) should tell or act the story of "The Golden Goblet", the little verse that the Prince in the story loved has so much meaning at this season of the year in connection with the children's simple gifts—

*Remember the sayings of long ago,
The wise men taught of old,
Love turns the gift to gold, you know,
Love turns the gift to gold.*

Below we give a brief summary of the story of "The Golden Goblet"—

The boyhood of Prince Saxon. His wise teacher, Martin, who taught the little Prince two sayings that he loved dearly. "The happiest gift is the best gift," and "Love turns the gift to gold."

Prince grown up. Martin goes away to his home at the edge of the kingdom—keeps village school—poor. A little son is born to him—called Ludwig.

Servant brings a beautiful golden goblet, the most beautiful the King has ever seen, he inquires about it. Learns it is a gift, sees paper inside—Ludwig is called for.

Shabby little Ludwig comes forward. King questions him, and remembers his old tutor and the verse.

Ludwig made the King's Cup-Beaver. His father sent for. Years after, the King gives Ludwig the golden goblet to hand down to his children. On one side these words cut deep—

"To Ludwig—from Saxon—King"

On the other—

"Love turns a gift to gold"

Little ones will also enjoy telling and acting the following stories—

The Three Christmas Trees, How the Fir Tree became the Christmas Tree, The Legend of St.

Christopher, The Legend of the Lighted Candle, Babouscka, the Russian Legend of the Christ Child, The Stranger Child; The Little Pine Tree that Wanted New Leaves, The Fir Tree (*Andersen*); Wee Robin's Christmas Song; The Elves and the Shoemaker.

No Christmas festival will be complete without carols, which the little ones will love to sing to their parents

A Very Happy Festival

At one school, Christmas was celebrated in a very unique way. Both babies and older children combined in making a Christmas tree for the birds. This meant an out-of-doors celebration.

The following purposeful work was carried out in school—

1. *A talk* was carried on in every form during the language period to decide (1) How to trim the tree; nothing must be put on to frighten the birds, or that would break and make a noise. (2) The birds that might be expected. (3) The kind of food different birds like.

2. *Handwork* Making the trimmings for the tree and trimming the tree. The children brought bread-crusts from home, these were made into chains; pea-nuts (monkey nuts), etc., were strung on thread. Pieces of suet were tied on to the tree with string. Little bags were filled with grain. Sunflower heads that had been saved by children who kept chickens were brought to school. A few coloured decorations were added, a little tinsel and some coloured rope chains. One fine afternoon, the children assembled around the tree, and sang Christmas carols and recited Christmas poems. Interested parents came to see the tree and hear the carols.

One good result from this unique way of celebrating Christmas was the keen interest it aroused in winter birds. This is a particularly valuable winter project for country children.

(c) Spring, or Easter, or May Day Festivals

May Day is celebrated in most schools by crowning a Queen, planting a tree, and dancing round a maypole. These are all actions and ideas that appeal to little children.

There are, however, a great many different

ways in which the spring festival can be kept in the Infant School, besides those already mentioned—ways that will give pleasure to both little ones and parents alike.

A pageant, out of doors, representing the awakening of the flowers, is always pleasing, and little ones can so quickly be converted into spring flowers, by wearing paper frocks in spring colours, by holding large paper flowers, by simple wreaths. To the sound of music they can very slowly awaken, throw off their green leaves (some little ones had the idea of covering themselves with leaves) and run to meet the butterflies and all join in a dance. (*See Rhythmic Plays, and Songs*)

A procession of the May Queen and all her attendants, followed by the flowers, will form part of the pageant. Flower songs, flower stories, flower dances may be introduced, but care must be taken never to have too long a programme for little ones. Something pleasing and quickly over is best.

In some cases it may be advisable to have a less elaborate festival than that suggested above.

For Indoors

The little ones will enjoy decorating their form room to welcome in May, just as in olden days girls and boys brought pretty branches from the woods. And the day can be an open day for the parents. Each child can make a little May Basket to give her mother when she comes. The basket may contain a few flowers, or drawings of flowers, or a little letter.

A May Day scene can be shown on the sand table, with paper dolls dancing around it.

2. National and Historical Festivals

Such festivals as these, involving a knowledge and some understanding of history, are less suitable for little ones.

Much of the significance of such a celebration the youngest children will fail to grasp, but they may be impressed with the patriotic fervour and reverence that it is beyond their powers to express.

How the Little Ones may Share

In rural schools and in city schools, where

older children are in the same building with the youngest children, the greater part of these celebrations can be carried out by the upper forms. Although the little ones will only have a minor part in these celebrations, they will enjoy the stirring music, they can take part in the marches or processions. If it is Commonwealth Day, they can learn to salute the flag which stands for *their home* as well as their country.

The older children cannot celebrate these days without some appreciation of the quality of the men, the high ideals of character, the self-sacrifice

3. *Children Entertain Parents*

It is a perfectly legitimate thing for the younger children to prepare tea for their parents, and to present something from their work in literature for their entertainment. It may be the telling or playing of some of the rhymes, poems, fables, or stories they have heard. In a large school, discretion must be used in limiting the size of the audience before whom the little ones are going to act, for there must be no straining of voice or undue effort.

No elaborate dresses should be used, because

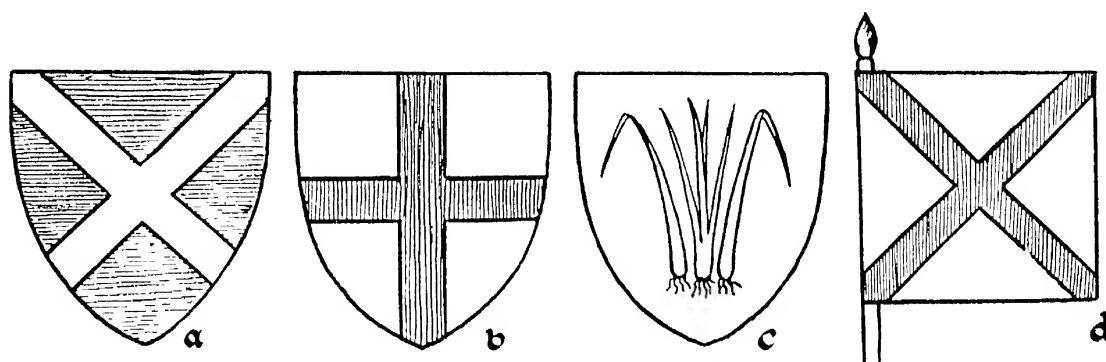


FIG 12

Flags and Emblems of Patron Saints

(a) *St Andrew (Scotland), white on blue* (b) *St George for England, red on white* (c) *St David for Wales, green on white* (d) *St Patrick for Ireland, red on white*

and the spirit of pure democracy that moved those who shaped the destiny of our country.

Festival and Saint Days

Love of 'country may be fostered in little children by letting them celebrate, in a very simple way, in their form rooms, the days of the patron saints, for example, St George, St Patrick, St. Andrew, and St. David. The celebration can consist of hearing the story, learning to tell it themselves, colouring or making the flags of these heroes to decorate the form room.

Other heroes, whose story will appeal to little ones, can be honoured in the same way, especially any local hero. No real social life is possible without the spirit of reverence, and gratitude to the past. The savage alone has no past or future.

they tend to make the little ones think about "the outward show." The preservation of the child's dramatic instinct must be kept in mind.

If the little ones are acting "Mother Goose" for their parents, they will be quite happy in their own dresses with nothing further than the addition of a crown of gold for King Cole, a bowl and spoon for Miss Muffit, and so on. Where, perhaps, in certain plays performed by the Transition Class and Form I, costumes really seem necessary—they should be kept as simple as possible and be appropriate in colour and design. Often the children can make their own from crêpe and coloured paper.

The use of scenery should be avoided. Little ones often set grown-up people a good example in the way they select only the vital things for their plays. Painted side-wings do not appeal to them, nor do cardboard trees. Simple curtains

of a good unobtrusive colour make always the best kind of background (*See the Section on Costume and Scenery*)

Between the telling of stories, the children can do some rhythmic exercises, play their band, and give a few simple songs (*See Section on Plays, Games, and Music*)

4. *Open Days*

The practice of having "Open Days" at certain intervals, such as once a month, when the parents are invited to visit the school and see the children at work, is a valuable way of increasing the good feeling between school and home, and of giving the parents some idea of how their little ones are being trained

The programme of these mothers' visits should vary; sometimes the chief idea will be the entertainment of the mothers with games, songs, and dances, something in the manner described above, sometimes an exhibition of work will be the main feature, sometimes the teacher may arrange to give certain lessons, such as stories or nature talks, followed by suitable handwork. If possible, the mothers should be invited to stay behind, to discuss certain subjects—the choice of suitable stories for children, suitable pictures. The lessons which the mothers hear may interest them in children's stories and arouse them to the danger of unsuitable stories. The nature lessons may make them realize the value of letting their little ones have pets and growing plants to tend. These discussions are generally the most valuable feature of the Open Days

Children Should Plan and Prepare

The principle of all social functions in connection with the school should be to let the children do all that they possibly can do for themselves. And always they can themselves write or decorate the invitations

Sometimes, when the children have been particularly happy over some project, they may themselves propose that their parents be asked to come to the school and see and hear what they have been doing. Perhaps they have been studying farm life. They become so interested that

they want to convey to their parents, or perhaps to another form, the results of their study. It is a big undertaking for little ones, but it gives purpose to their work. They select what mode of expression they like, to make their knowledge clear to their parents. They generally paint or draw pictures, or model, or act out some scene, not because they can do these things well, but because colour, form, and movement more fully express what they have to tell, and are, with little children, easier to command than speech alone

Models of a farm and all the interesting animals and things connected with a farm can be made by the children to show to their parents. (*See what it says about the study of the Farm in the Sections on Nature Study and Geography Stories*)

A Farm Programme

The following programme has proved successful—

1 One or two songs about farm life. These are chosen by the children

2 One or two recitations, for example, Stevenson's "The Cow"

3 Each child tells or shows something about the farm. One child may show pictures of all the animals found on a farm (these should be mounted on brown paper) and tell their names. Another child tells how butter is made, another describes haymaking, etc. Pictures and models help to explain the children's talk. Each child comes forward to speak, all come forward for the songs

Some thought should be given to the arrangement of the room. The children place their models, pictures, charts, etc., on a table in front of the audience so that they can easily find them and hold them up. The above is possible work for children of six and seven.

5. "Grown-Up" Functions

By these we mean festivals proposed by the children in imitation of some grown-up festival they have seen, for example, a Kindergarten Flower Show, a Bazaar, and other simple social functions.

Children are quick to copy their elders. If there has been a Flower Show in the neighbourhood, or if perhaps only one child has been taken to see one, some enterprising little six-year-old may propose that they have one all to themselves. Flowers and growing things are so beloved by children, that no opportunity should be lost for using this love to advantage. We might, indeed, imitate the Japanese and have simple little functions in honour of the different flowers as they appear. In any case we can have our May Day celebration to honour the flowers of spring, a flower show, such as we are going to describe, to honour the flowers of summer, and our Autumn Thanksgiving to honour the flowers and fruits of autumn.

Parents will delight to come to their little ones' flower show. All out-of-door functions are especially pleasing during sunny days, and children and flowers go so well together.

Planning a Flower Show

Enough work can be found for all to do—even the babies. And opportunity will be found for correlating all the subjects of the curriculum in this project. Here are examples of some of the work that may be done—

Making a brown paper book of pressed flowers or leaves.

Making charts of cut-paper flowers, charts of painted flowers and pressed flowers.

Arranging flowers happily in bunches or posies, or in bowls and jars.

The little ones will be anxious to show all the flowers best known to them, and if they cannot get the real flower, they can be allowed to represent it in some way. Fig. 13 shows a beautiful example of a dandelion cut from paper, it is part of the chart of cut-paper flowers, already mentioned.

Some children may wish to make artificial flowers, and if it is to be their own function, they should be allowed to carry out all reasonable ideas that they think will please their parents.

The names of the flowers and plants must be written or printed, also the invitation. Each invitation must have a little flower drawn on it.

Flower Day Programme

On the actual day, the programme will consist of—

1. Visiting the form rooms to see the collection of flowers.



FIG. 13

Part of a Flower Chart of Cut Paper Flowers for a Flower Show

2. Songs about flowers and, if possible, flower dances out of doors. (See Section on Songs and Rhythmic Games.)

3. Simple flower stories, told and dramatized.

Little Hosts and Hostesses

Other simple social functions may include tea parties, lunch, or picnic parties given by one form to the other, or other simple functions based on the children's own suggestions.

These tea parties are a means of teaching children to hold themselves well, to plan and arrange without extravagance, they will involve counting and simple calculations, the wise choice of foods, etc., but above all, they are of value if they give the child *poise* and self-control and self-confidence.

